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Reagan biographer Edmund Morris tells his story

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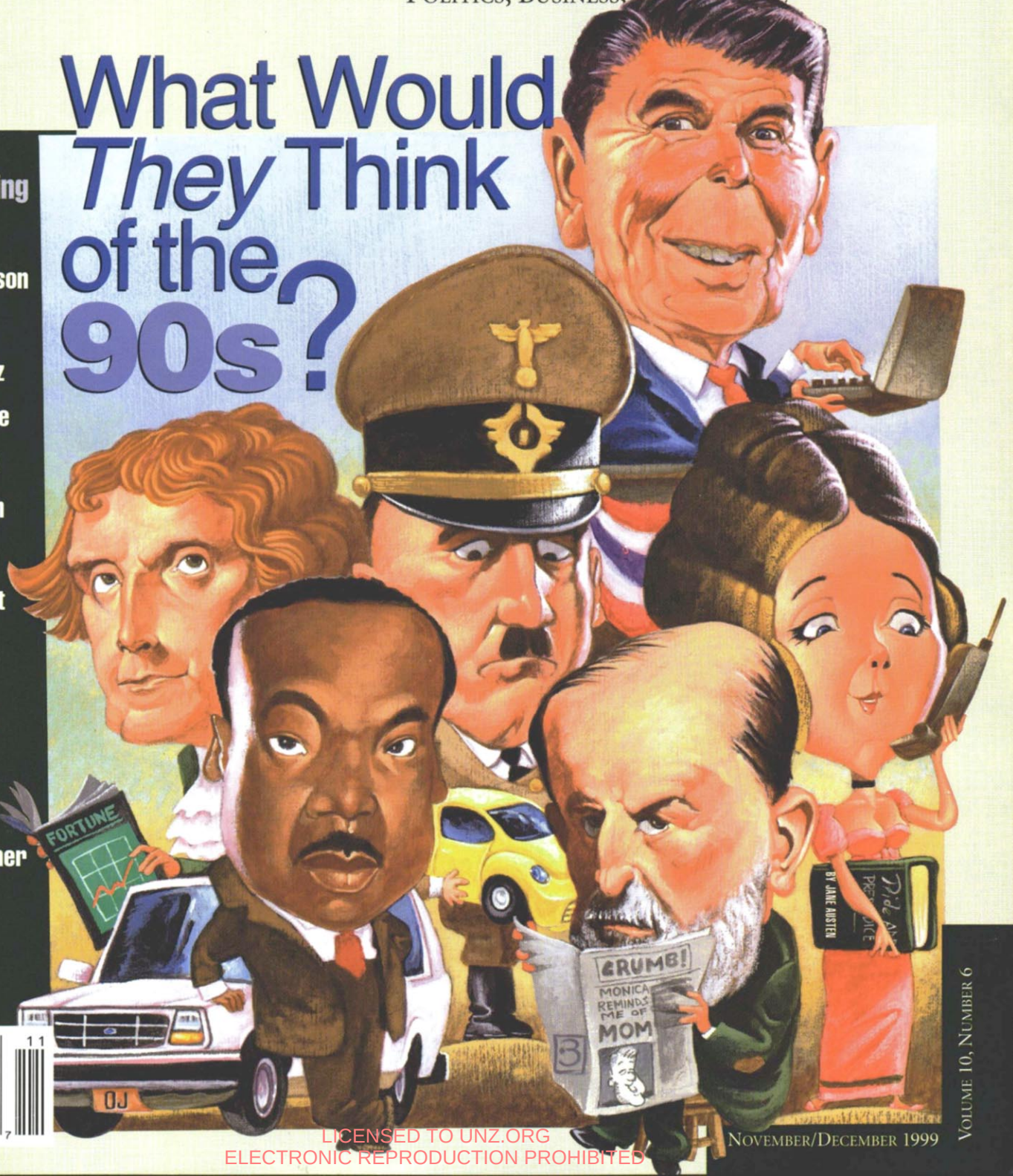

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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1999

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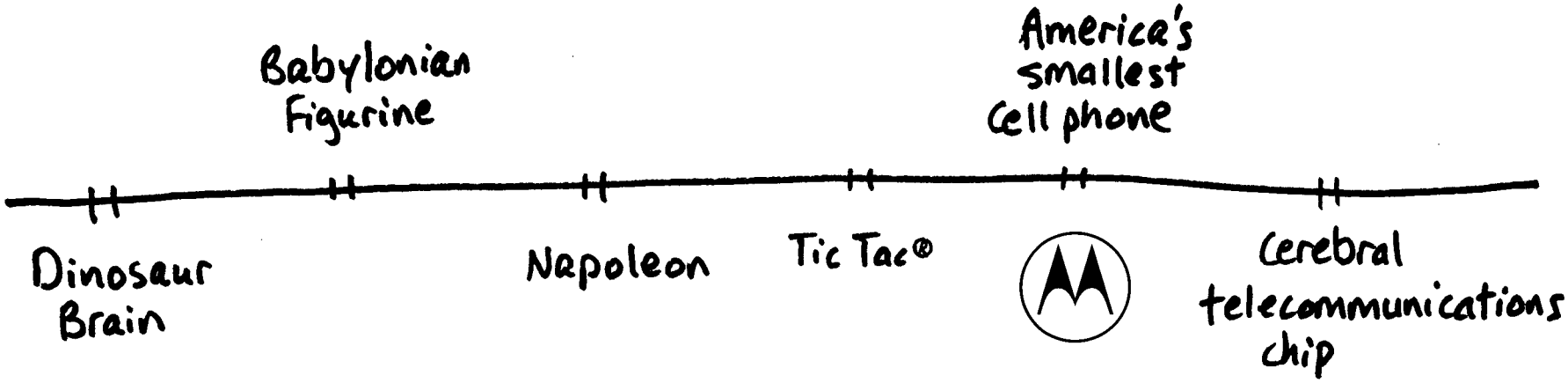

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A NATIONAL MAGAZINE OF POLITICS, BUSINESS, AND CULTURE

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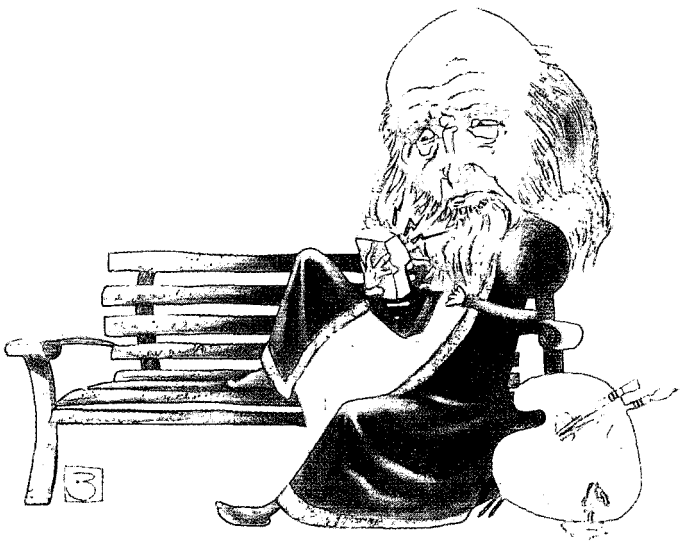

Ralph butler

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Bird's Eye

Karl Zinsmeister

Grading the '90s

One thousand years was more than we could handle just now. So rather than inflict a "Millennium Wrap-Up" on you this fall, we at *The American Enterprise* decided to try something more modest: Helping you make sense of the last decade. An intriguing way to do this, we thought, would be to pick a couple dozen important figures from history and then ask some distinguished essayists to imagine what those individuals would have thought of the 1990s had they been able to witness them. In this way you get not only some good vinegary analysis of the times we've just passed through, but also a little refresher course on fascinating people from earlier eras. (Let's face it, Americans could avoid a lot of trouble if they knew more history.)

Mark Twain—whose eyeballs we look through in one of our essays—said that all people could be sorted into three categories: the commonplace, the remarkable, and the lunatics. We picked historical personages from each of those groups. You'll find them all rattling away, through the voices of their modern alter egos, starting on page 40.

While waiting for these essays to come in, I got to thinking about someone in my own immediate life who might've had a telling thought or two on the '90s. After experiencing all of the twentieth century as preface (she was born in 1900) my grandmother observed most of the current decade before she died in 1996.

For a sense of how dizzying many aspects of the '90s must have seemed to her, look at the photograph nearby. Whoever took this shot wanted to show my great-grandfather breaking a new pony to harness (that's him walking in the dark coat). What really fascinates me, though, is a detail in the background.

Look behind the pony. That's the house my grandmother grew up in and shared with her parents and sister until she was ten. It had two rooms: a kitchen and a combination living room/bedroom. My grandmother was born in the living room after a difficult labor with no anesthetics or modern medicine. She slept in her parents' bed for several years until her baby sister arrived, at which point she shifted to the couch. The place had no indoor plumbing, electricity, or heat beyond the wood stove. Raising youngsters in such conditions today might get child-welfare authorities after you.

Yet I can assure you my grandmother was not neglected. Nor was she some Appalachian waif; hers was a quite typical farm family in central Ohio; she went on to graduate from college. Nor is this ancient history—she was a woman who heard cell phones ringing in shirt pockets and saw Republicans re-take the House.

You can imagine how certain aspects of the 1990s would look to such a person. You didn't want to give my grandmother the crybaby speech about how hard it is for couples to make ends meet now. For a woman who cooked on a wood-burning stove until she was 37, the material bounty of our era was a hard-earned marvel, not something to take for granted. At the same time, Marjorie Wilcox would have found many aspects of 1999 life somewhere between puzzling and disturbing. I think the thing that would have appalled her most is how little devotion and cohesion now exists within many families, and how little of their own time and essence many parents are willing to pour into their children.

The sublime English poet William Wordsworth spent most of his life in a simple country cottage devoting his days to "plain living and high thinking." Some 1990s citizens have reversed that formulation. We've never lived higher; lucky us. But we've allowed too much of our thinking to become plain, or even degraded—dragged down by a gutterized popular culture, a collapse of standards among responsible elites, and an explosion of narcissism.

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YOU DIDN'T WANT TO GIVE MY GRANDMOTHER THE CRYBABY SPEECH ABOUT HOW HARD IT IS TO MAKE ENDS MEET IN THE 1990S.

Our amiably amoral President is an apt symbol of this warm, friendly, and too common strain of corruption. Bill Clinton brings to mind Clarence Darrow's statement: "When I was a boy, I was told that anybody could become President; I'm beginning to believe it."

Even as we exult that our society has never been healthier in material terms, many Americans fret over ethical conditions in the '90s (despite our awareness that any moral criticism today can get you tarred as a fogey, fossil, or fascist), simply because we recognize that, eventually, the various facets of a culture all interconnect. A society won't remain economically robust over the long run if its discipline disappears. Its politics won't be healthy if honesty rots away. Edmund Burke pointed out that "Men are qualified for civil liberties in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains upon their appetites," and that's truer in the '90s (where self-control is often the only remaining governor on behavior) than it ever was before.

But the 1990s are not truly an anything-goes era. The great social critic Robert Nisbet noted some time ago that while on the surface ours is a period of unbridled freedom, in areas of economics, schooling, local independence, family life, and self-determination—the sectors "by far the most vital to any free society"—modern citizens are often wrapped in bureaucratic chains. Nisbet notes that across stretches of history ranging from the Caesars to Napoleon, relatively superficial liberties like sexual laxity have often created "the illusion of individual freedom" in societies that are actually growing "steadily more centralized, collectivized, and destructive of the diversity of allegiance, the autonomy of enterprise...that any genuinely free civilization requires."

Signs of this utterly-liberated-yet-tightly-controlling mentality are all around us in the '90s—for instance on college campuses, where every drug and sex experiment is indulged, and every minority-led building seizure or newspaper burning excused, yet you can be expelled for calling someone a water buffalo or parodying feminism or ebonics. This is a strange 1990s paradox, and it comes up repeatedly in our essayists' articles.

All of the above said, I myself would still vote 1999 America as a fairly wondrous time and place to be alive. (I'm sure Marjorie Wilcox and most of her contemporaries would agree.) If you are careful, and able to keep yourself and your children out of the cultural quicksand, there has never in history been a richer garden awaiting your seed. Our opportunities are enormous, and we have never been better protected from arbitrary vagaries (U.S. life expectancy was just 47 years when my grandmother was born).

Robert Frost (another of the individuals through whom we interpret the '90s) gave one of his poems the wonderful title: "Happiness Makes up in Height for What It Lacks in Length." I sometimes think one could apply a similar description to our current decade. For all of our disheartening problems, today's glorious moments are very glorious indeed.

The first two articles in our feature section—one by Richard Brookhiser and another by Bruce Thornton and Victor Hanson—set up our later material on the '90s rather nicely. For they are about one of the most un-'90s individuals in American history: George Washington, who died exactly 200 years ago in December. If the '90s are an era of hype and celebrity, Washington stood for the opposite qualities of quiet duty, modesty, decency, and selflessness. He was not gnawed by a hunger for power or fame.

At the same time, Washington was emphatically *not* the boring, wooden cipher most contemporary Americans take him to be. He was an aggressive, imaginative businessman who, at a time when agriculture was critical to America yet mired in subsistence-level backwardness in most places, imported new plant species, designed a complex round barn for grain-milling, and established big commercial fish-netting operations on the Potomac. He was an impressive athlete who could outride any contemporary on horseback, and a bold general at a time when generals commanded right at the front lines, often catching bullets in the process (Washington's clothes were ventilated on numerous occasions).

In an article in *Art Issues*, columnist Dave Hickey suggests the contemporary word which best captures Washington is *cool.* Hickey defines as cool a person who doesn't need to plead his beliefs, because he is able to embody them, in a simple, graceful way. He suggests it's less what Washington stood for that we admire than that

> he simply stood, the embodiment of everything the republic might be.... My favorite Washington story concerns his deportment at the Second Continental Congress, which could never have been assembled without his guaranteed presence. Throughout the deliberations, the shouting and wrangling, the nitpicking and backbiting, Washington sat there, hands in his lap with his legs crossed, saying little or nothing. Occasionally, however, when the debate became especially heated or seemed to divagate from its purposes, Washington would shift his weight in his chair and cross his legs the other way and, at that moment, as if he had turned the tiller of the Ship of State, the debate would take a new direction. That, my friends, is cool.

Washington wasn't the only great American to embody this extraordinary mix of competence and humility. Robert E.

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WHILE ON THE SURFACE OURS IS A PERIOD OF UNBRIDLED FREEDOM, IN THE MOST VITAL AREAS CITIZENS ARE OFTEN WRAPPED IN BUREAUCRATIC CHAINS.

Lee practiced a similar quiet stoicism, refusing his life long to grant a newspaper interview or write a memoir of his brilliant Civil War leadership, because that would be "trading on the blood of my men." A more recent American statesman who triumphed where brasher men failed—through the sheer force of his moral principles and strength of his confidence—was Ronald Reagan. His new biographer Edmund Morris makes it clear that while the hard masculine shell of simplified conviction that Reagan (like Washington) formed around his private life often made him a puzzle up close, it also made him an extremely potent leader. The very first print interview Morris granted to discuss his complex new book was with *TAE*'s John Meroney, and we present the biographer's fascinating comments on page 21.

The power-eschewing, limelight-avoiding decency of men like Washington, Lee, and Reagan is not gone from our public life. The impulse lives on in many nooks and crannies, deep within the personalities of particular Americans, even in our politics. A reassuring glimpse of it can be seen, for instance, in Bill Kauffman's profile of a present-day U.S. sachem whose Mount Vernon is in Alexander, New York, rather than Alexandria, Virginia. (See page 32.)

And the good news is, so long as this wholesome native selflessness endures, no American decade—whether the 1990s or the 2090s—will lack for nobility and accomplishment.

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IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

The Mistake of the Century. Yes, it's a *C*-word—but something bigger than Communism.

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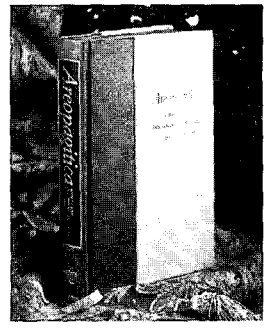
AREOPAGITICA AND OTHER POLITICAL WRITINGS OF JOHN MILTON

Foreword by John Alvis



As poet, statesman, and pamphleteer, John Milton remains one of the singular champions of liberty in the annals of history. Even in his mediations on theology Milton strove to demonstrate that liberty—of conscience—is one of the inviolable rights of free peoples. In his theological writings he seeks to unite ancient philosophy and the authority of the Judeo-Christian scriptures to support the concept of free, republican government. During the crises that wracked English life and liberties during the seventeenth century, Milton's was one of the indispensable voices and pens. He published several revolutionary manifestos, two works defending regicide, and of course the famous *Areopagitica* or defense of freedom of expression and the press against censorship. John Alvis has collected into a superb one-volume edition all of Milton's political writings of enduring importance. These include the entirety of *Areopagitica, The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates, A Defence of the People of England, The Second Defence of the People of England, The Readie and Easie Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth,* and *Mr. John Milton's Character of the Long Parliament.*

John Milton (1608–1674) was the author also of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* and served as Latin secretary to Oliver Cromwell during the Commonwealth.

John Alvis is Professor of English at the University of Dallas and the Institute for Philosophic Studies.

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Sidelights

Psychology professor **Philip Tetlock** collected predictions from over 200 "experts" over the past 12 years; those who said they were very sure of their predictions were wrong 65 percent of the time—an accuracy rate worse than a flipped coin would have provided. ❧ Only 16 percent of meals eaten at home last year were home-cooked, according to *World Watch.* ❧ **Buddy Roogow**, Maryland's lottery director, admits that winning the lottery is nearly impossible: "That's why we emphasize the fun of playing. A government body has to be socially responsible." ❧ Sixty-two percent of white, non-immigrant parents (compared to 28 percent of foreign-born parents) admitted they sometimes take their U.S. freedoms for granted, a Public Agenda poll found. ··· Ninety-two percent of immigrant parents said it was important "for public schools that have a lot of immigrant students to concentrate on teaching these students about the heroes, traditions, and beliefs of the United States." ❧ An Iceland grocery chain opposed to genetically modified foods ran a picture of **Bill Clinton** over the caption, "The U.S. President doesn't care what you put in your mouth," the *Wall Street Journal* reports. ❧ PBS critic **Laurence Jarvik** notes that the nonprofit network's flagship Boston station, WGBH, has over 1,000 employees (100 in fundraising alone), more than Boston's ABC, CBS, and NBC stations combined. ❧ "An illegal immigrant from China appealed to a Hong Kong court for a longer sentence behind bars because he can make more money in prison in still-capitalist Hong Kong than he can working in the [socialist] mainland," reports *Heterodoxy.* ❧ In 1997-98, the number of students expelled for bringing guns to school declined by 31 percent, the U.S. Department of Education reports. Columbine "is an aberration," says **Wesley Mitchell**, chief of police for L.A.'s Unified School District. "We truly understand things are not getting worse. They are getting better." ··· Most high school students say the nation's greatest problem is crime and violence, with declining families and morals the second greatest problem, according to a poll for the Horatio Alger Association. ··· Over two-thirds of the students said religious activities are important to their success; four out of 10 public school students said other students' behavior interferes with their performance.

A Zogby poll of likely voters in the New York senate race found **Rudy Giuliani** beating **Hillary Clinton** by 50 percent to 36 percent among union members. ··· A Skaneateles, New York restaurant has a Hillary sandwich: "Ingredients: Mostly baloney." ❧ Pundit **Paul Gigot** notes that Representative **Jim Rogan** (R-Calif.), previously believed to be the most endangered House impeachment manager, is enjoying massive financial support, with thousands of voters turning out for his re-election announcement. Gigot's moral of the story: "Politicians can ignore the polls, do the right thing, and still prosper." ❧ **Geraldo Rivera**, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News*, CNN, and CBS all reported the Clintonista claim that Whitewater witness **David Hale** was paid off by the President's enemies, but none of these outlets carried reports when the claim was shown to be false, the Media Research Center observes. ❧ A ground-breaking study of the Internet economy from the University of Texas discovered several startling facts: The Net created 1.2 million jobs in 1998 and generated revenues of $301 billion, much larger than expected and roughly comparable to the size of the U.S. auto industry. Revenue per Net employee averaged $250,000, compared to $160,000 for non-Net workers. ··· The American Management Association reports one out of three job-seekers in 1998 had insufficient language and/or math skills for the job they sought. ··· The majority of American companies have been sued over employment-related matters, according to the Society for Human Resource Management and New York law firm Jackson Lewis. ··· The rate at which workers voluntarily quit their jobs is the highest it's been in a decade; executive-search firms predict their revenues will be twice the 1993 level, the *Wall Street Journal* reports. ❧ The IRS says 142,500 people had adjusted gross incomes of $1 million or more in 1997, up from 87,000 in 1995. ❧ When Texas recently granted a weekend sales-tax holiday, J.C. Penney stores saw their sales more than double. "People look at it as a way to dig into the government coffers," a store spokesman explained, "and people like to do that." ❧ San Francisco's City Hall recently became the nation's first to fly the homosexual rainbow flag. ❧ Tory philosopher **Roger Scruton** is being sued for damages by the Pet Shop Boys, a British rock group whose musicianship he criticized in a recent book. ❧ **Andree Conrad** of *Apparel Industry* magazine spots a new trend: exposed bra straps. "Even Mennonite girls are wearing [them] in church functions," she sighs. —*SW*

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SCAN

U.S. BUREAU OF AUTOCRATIC TERROR

In *Waco: Rules of Engagement,* the Oscar-nominated film about the massacre at Waco, Harvard psychiatrist and lawyer Alan Stone says that when he was first appointed by the Justice Department to the panel investigating Waco, he thought the main problem would be to understand the psychology of the people inside the compound. "I quickly became aware," he says, "that the psychology of the people outside the compound was more important."

The Davidians had undergone an assault by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) that began on February 28, 1993, with the shooting of their Malamute and her four pups. Although someone in the initial Waco assault (referred to by the ATF as "Showtime") was clearly trigger-happy, it's still unclear who started the shooting. One of the Davidians, Wayne Martin, an African-American Harvard Law graduate, can be heard in *Rules of Engagement* calling 911 from inside the compound, begging for help. "We're under fire! There are women and children in here! Tell them to call it off! I have a right to defend myself!"

Even an arrest by law officers may be legally resisted if the officers use excessive force. A jury in San Antonio ruled that the four dead ATF agents were killed in self-defense by the Davidians, who lost six of their own that day. Though no good reason has ever been given for the huge show of force in the initial ATF raid, other than that it was a publicity stunt to offset the ATF's growing reputation as a rogue agency a few weeks before their appropriations hearing in Congress, Henry Ruth, one of three independent reviewers of the Treasury Department's report on Waco, said part of the ATF's motive, never stated but definitely there, was to enforce government disdain for these odd people.

There is no need to believe in any conspiracy theory regarding Waco. The government went there armed, not with a conspiracy, but with an attitude that, after the ATF agents were killed, hardened into revenge. "A negotiation strategy was abandoned in favor of a military mentality," says Alan Stone. When the grandmother of Davidian leader David Koresh appeared at the stand-off, telling agents she could bring him out, she was refused permission to speak. "I hope she has told him good-bye," one of the agents was overheard saying as she walked away.

Though it remains unclear who or what started the final fire, the FBI clearly had fire on its mind. At night, loudspeakers blasted a song from Nancy Sinatra: "You keep thinking that you'll never get burned. Well, I just got me a brand new box of matches, and what I got you ain't got time to learn." An FBI negotiator asked the Davidians if they had any fire extinguishers inside. The answer: only one. "Somebody just better buy some fire insurance," said the negotiator.

"They saw all this as working from a military point of view," Stone says of the FBI, "but they didn't realize they were driving the Davidians to a point of desperation."

Attorney General Janet Reno (of whom Democratic pollster Pat Cadell says, "if she wasn't a woman she would have been fired long ago") told Congress the "tanks knocking over the walls at Waco were unarmed, and just pieces of equipment similar to a good rent-a-car." More recently, we learned the Justice Department withheld from Congress the forty-ninth page of an FBI report, which admitted they used pyrotechnic devices at Waco, and also hid the probability that Delta Force military commandos were active at the scene.

The Justice Department's report fails to describe the decision-making process at the D.C. command post. "I think that is unpardonable," says Stone. "There is nothing in the investigation of what was going on in Washington where...high officials of the FBI and Clinton administration were making the decisions."

Former Senator John Danforth, recently appointed to get to the bottom of the story, says he will try to discover whether the government engaged in a cover-up. But there's a deeper question: Should the FBI, ATF, and others rethink their rules when engaged in a stand-off against American men, women, and children, so that such murderous government overreactions will not be repeated?

—**Sarah J. McCarthy** *is co-author of* Mom & Pop vs. the Dreambusters.

THEY'RE OVERQUALIFIED

Of the 27 candidates who entered Baltimore's recent Democratic primary for mayor, six turned out to have arrest records and three had filed for bankruptcy. One was arrested for burglary after a policeman recognized her during a TV appearance. Another has been convicted of larceny, shoplifting, and impersonating a police officer. One frontrunner (a former city councilman) was caught falsely claiming to have a college degree, while another (the sitting Council president) had his car repossessed by the bank and was sued by other unpaid creditors.

When the race was won by one of the few candidates not under a cloud, the headline in the normally oh-so-sensitive *Washington Post* actually read, "White Man Gets Mayoral Nomination in Baltimore." This inspired Washington's *City Paper* to suggest other possible headlines, like "Big, Scary Black Guy Suspected of Killing People for Fun," and "Another Hillbilly Pervert High School Janitor Picked Up for Sexual Assault." If only the *Post* headlines always "reflected the true subtext of every story," pined *City Paper* columnist David Carr.

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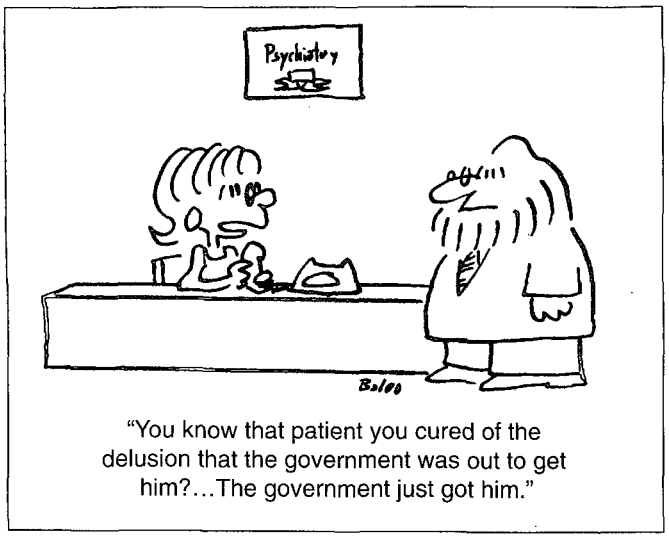


"You know that patient you cured of the delusion that the government was out to get him?...The government just got him."

*From the Wall Street Journal—Permission, Cartoon Features Syndicate

STONE'S MORE A SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

Warren Beatty and Cybill Shepherd want to be President. Their qualifications are obvious. Beatty is extremely liberal and played an unbalanced socialist senator in a movie. Shepherd once played an aide to a politician in *Taxi Driver*. There's also Alec Baldwin, who wants to be senator, or the conscience of the nation, or maybe he just wants to prove his low SAT scores didn't really mean anything.

Obviously somebody has become confused about reality versus fantasy. "Murphy Brown" started it all. In real life, Dan Quayle criticized the show's producers for having the make-believe Brown birth a baby out of wedlock. But the make-believe character took it personally on the show—as if Quayle and Brown shared the same dimension. The confusion was understandable because Washington rubes had been making cameos on the show for years.

Then came Clinton. His entire career rests on blurred lines (between wrong and right, between truth and lie, between pants up and pants down), and he fuzzed up the lines between Tinseltown and Washington more than ever. Hollywood set up a base camp at the White House. Clinton brought Sharon Stone to a summit meeting in Vancouver. He held a policy conference on health care for Barbra Streisand and friends. In fact, when Barbra discovered that Sharon was visiting the President more than she was, she became furious, reportedly saying, "What does Sharon Stone know about policy?"

Nothing of course. But that doesn't matter in the movies. Remember the film *Dave*, about a good-hearted job counselor who's mistaken for the President? Dave is a nice guy; so obviously the real President had to be (A) a complete jerk and, therefore, (B) a Republican. Dave was pure liberal fantasy: The answers to our problems are obvious to any compassionate person. All compassionate people are liberal. Ergo, if a liberal person seized power we'd solve everything. So what is Dave's solution that the right-wingers missed for lo these many years? A jobs bill. O glory be! "If everybody had a guaranteed job, America would be wonderful; so I'm passing a law giving everybody a job," declares the faux President. Of course, it's a dumb idea and, uh, it's actually been tried in a few places—like Albania. But never mind, it's the movies!

In Hollywood's depictions of politics, a big speech promising something good is identical to the good thing itself. So when Michael Douglas screams at the end of *The American President,* "we're gonna get the guns!" well then, that's it, hooray. Where's the cast party?

So now Warren Beatty wants to step out of the two-dimensional world and run for President. In *Bulworth* he gives a glimpse of how he thinks the world works. Black teenage gang-bangers in South Central really only want ice cream. Gun-toting, ebonics-speaking, twenty-something hipster women can spend all-night grinding in a ghetto club and then give eloquent disquisitions on urban economics.

Beatty recently wrote an op-ed for the *New York Times* that still has Washington eyes watering. This time, rather than rap to show his conviction, Beatty writes in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS to show that he REALLY MEANS SOMETHING. But despite his SERIOUSNESS, Beatty seems to realize he's still in the land of make-believe: "Someone must rise to honor the historic mission of the Democratic Party. Why not Bradley? Why not Gore? Why not now? Stay tuned. We'll be back after this message."

Indeed.

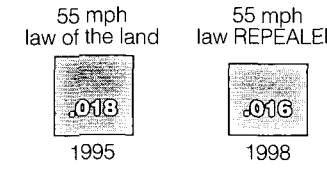
—**Jonah Goldberg** *is a daily Internet columnist for* National Review.

WRONG AGAIN

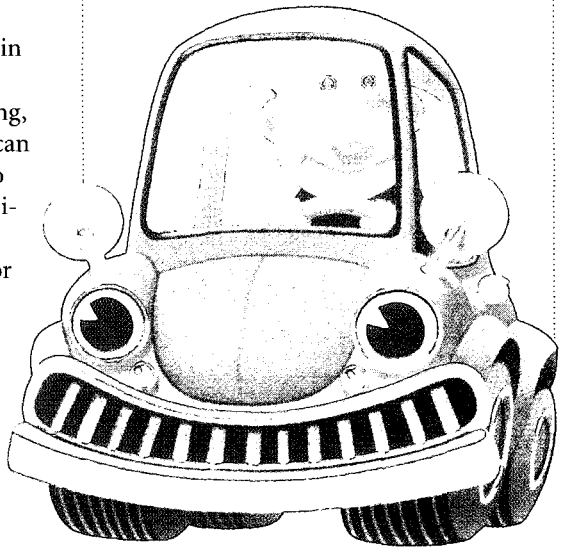
"History will never forgive Congress for this assault on human life." That was Ralph Nader's statement when the national 55 mile per hour speed limit was repealed in November 1995. Other safety activists were equally inflammatory. Nader's friends in government at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration predicted the repeal would result in 6,400 more deaths each year.

Recently announced figures show they were wrong: In 1995, 41,817 Americans were killed on highways. In 1998, with 55 mph scrapped in every state but Hawaii, the total was 41,480. Measured as fatalities per 100 million passenger miles traveled, deaths dropped from 1.8 in 1995 to 1.6 in 1998:

Auto fatalities per million miles



Source: U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



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SOCCER BOMBERS CLOSE RANKS

The Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) first made its name by assassinating an African-American school superintendent in California. In 1974, it committed its most famous crime, the kidnapping of newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst, then 19. The group imprisoned Hearst in a closet and raped her over a period of weeks until she agreed to join her captors.

Kathy Soliah, age 27, joined this "army" in 1974 with full knowledge of its criminal history. Before long, according to Hearst's detailed 1982 testimony, she was participating in felonies like the April 1975 robbery of Crocker National Bank in Carmichael, California,

Soliah, carrying a carbine and a pistol, was part of the four-person assault team. They burst into the bank and proceeded to kick and stomp the customers, many of them elderly. In walked Myrna Opsahl, mother of four, to deposit the previous week's collection of the Carmichael Seventh Day Adventist Church. SLA member Emily Harris ordered Opsahl to lie down. Bewildered, Opsahl failed to comply quickly enough to satisfy Harris, who shoved her shotgun into the woman's stomach and pulled the trigger. Hearst quotes Harris saying later, "Oh, she's dead, but it doesn't really matter. She was a bourgeois pig anyway. Her husband is a doctor."

Kathy Soliah's next "revolutionary actions" involved placing large "anti-personnel bombs" in public buildings and under cars. In August 1975, she and other SLA members cruised Los Angeles looking for a suitable site to attack. They first settled on a hotel convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, but aroused the suspicion of a guard. They then placed their bombs under some police cars. When the first vehicle pulled away from the curb, the device failed to explode and remained lying in the street. Two children found it and began playing with it. Still the bomb did not go off. Shortly thereafter, an adult recognized what it was and called the police. It was this attempted bombing for which Kathy Soliah was indicted in 1976. Not long after, the SLA broke up. Kathy Soliah, who stayed with the gang to the bitter end, forged a new identity, calling herself Sara Jane Olson, apparently as a tribute to Sara Jane Moore, who had recently tried unsuccessfully to assassinate President Ford.

In June 1999—23 years after her indictment for conspiracy to commit murder—Kathy Soliah was arrested in St. Paul, Minnesota. The local response? An outpouring of support. Democratic state legislators and former mayoral candidates Andy Dawkins and Sandy Pappas were her most outspoken defenders. Dawkins said the allegations against Soliah, if true, represent "a momentary lapse in judgment."

Pappas, for whom Soliah had raised campaign funds, attacked the FBI for tracking her down: "Don't they have any real crimes to fight?" It is difficult to imagine what crimes Ms. Pappas considers more "real" than murder, bank robbery, and attempted murder. Welfare reform, perhaps.

It is perhaps not surprising that liberal Democratic officeholders supported Soliah. What is more troubling is the grass-roots movement that has emerged on her behalf. Soliah's friends and allies have produced a cookbook containing her favorite recipes, held benefits to demonstrate their support, and raised $1 million to bail her out of jail. Local church groups and the "theater community," in which Soliah was active, have rallied to her defense.

Her advocates credit Soliah with being a "Democratic activist," "a true humanitarian," a "social activist, marathon runner, volunteer, and soccer mom," an actress who hosts fund raisers for Democractic candidates, a gourmet cook who "is involved in every peace and justice issue that comes along." Apparently, so long as you pay lip service to "peace and justice," terrorism is O.K.

What awaits Kathy Soliah, regrettably, is probably something other than punishment. The criminal case against her, scheduled for trial in January, is weak. It is nearly 25 years old, key witnesses have died, and Patricia Hearst, the only witness who could definitely tie Soliah to the crimes she committed, has said she wants to forget the entire era and will not cooperate. Soliah might be tried and acquitted, but most likely she will plead guilty to a minor offense in exchange for a nominal penalty. Such an outcome will be hailed by Soliah—who has never uttered a single word of public regret for her crimes—and her supporters as a vindication.

Still, the prosecution of Kathy Soliah by the Los Angeles D.A.'s office demonstrates that at least some Americans are still devoted to justice. Some refuse to forget Myrna Opsahl. Some still care about the veterans and police officers Soliah tried her best to murder. Against a tide of muddleheadedness, political convenience, and historical airbrushing, justice hangs on by its fingernails.

—Minneapolis attorneys **John Hinderaker** *and* **Scott Johnson** *are adjunct fellows of the Claremont Institute.*

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ATTENDING THE SCHOOL OF HARDWOOD KNOCKS

College sports continue to grow more mercenary, according to the latest study of student athlete graduation rates. The NCAA announced this fall that only 41 percent of Division I male basketball players entering college in 1992 were graduated within six years. The rates were 53 percent for white players, 33 percent for black players. Schools like Michigan, Arkansas, Cincinnati, and Syracuse graduated only 13-17 percent of all their players.

By contrast, North Carolina graduated 75 percent, and Duke 82 percent, demonstrating that it's possible to maintain academic standards while having a winning program. Yes, this will require flunking out some athletes who insist on blowing off school. If it becomes a general expectation, however, that college athletes are not just gladiators but must be treated seriously by their host institutions as students as well, the beneficiaries will be the athletes themselves.

THE CASE AGAINST MANDATORY POLITICS

This month (October), oral argument will be heard before the United States Supreme Court in the case of *Southworth v. U. of Wisconsin*. At issue is whether the First Amendment rights of college students are violated when their compulsory student fees are used to fund political causes with which they disagree.

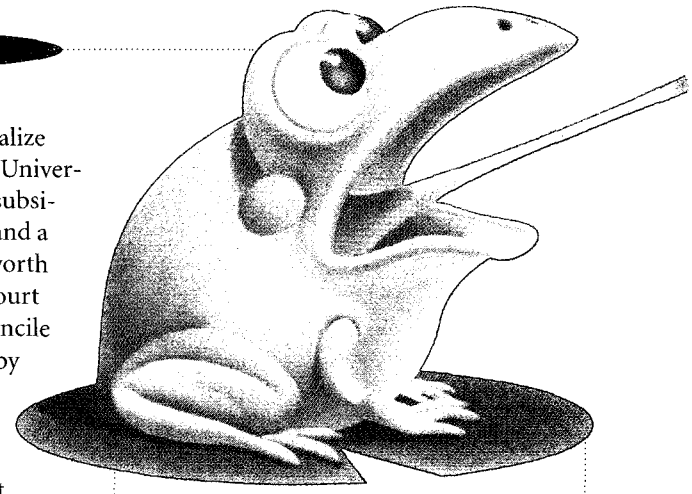
In 1995, University of Wisconsin students challenged the use of a portion of their activity fees for political activism by Marxist, homosexual, and abortion rights groups. Among other things, these groups used student activity funding to introduce bills in the Wisconsin legislature, lobby Congress on federal legislation, and prepare scorecards rating congressional candidates.

This commonplace funding practice has led to lawsuits across the nation. In New Jersey, Rutgers students have opposed the use of student fees to fund lobbying for the Equal Rights Amendment. University of California at Berkeley students have challenged the use of fees to support campaigns to legalize marijuana. Students at the State University of New York were forced to subsidize lobbying for disarmament and a nuclear arms freeze. The Southworth case will present the Supreme Court with its first opportunity to reconcile conflicting rulings on this issue by lower courts.

The First Amendment was added to our Constitution in large part to prevent government coercion of American citizens in matters of conscience. The First Amendment is itself modeled on the Virginia Statute on Religious Liberty—where Thomas Jefferson's draft warns, "to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves is sinful and tyrannical."

Universities argue that the current system of mandatory student organization funding is educationally necessary, but a lower court held that forcing students to fund activist groups actually undermines the educational mission of universities by devaluing freedom of belief. In the past, the Supreme Court has held that "vigilant protection of constitutional freedoms is nowhere more vital than in the community of American schools." This winter, the Court may teach that lesson again to the university establishment. •

—**Matt Daniels** *is an attorney and president of the Massachusetts Family Institute in Boston.*



THEY TASTE JUST LIKE CHICKEN LITTLE

This summer's research findings were unkind to environmental alarmists. First, federal fraud investigators discovered the 1992 studies claiming to show electric fields cause cancer—which kicked off an activist-led hullabaloo about the dangers of high-tension power lines and even household appliances—were faked by the researcher in charge. Robert Liburdy "engaged in scientific misconduct in biomedical research by falsifying and fabricating data and claims about the purported cellular effects of electric and magnetic fields," reported the U.S. Office of Research Integrity. As the *New York Times* daintily concluded (after noting that 20 other careful studies by cancer researchers found no electricity-cancer link), "the disclosure appears to strengthen the case that electric power is safe."

Next: Remember all those scary stories in the news over the last few years about deformed frogs? After some Minnesota children captured a bunch of grotesquely malformed croakers back in 1994, tales of misshapen amphibians began to pop up all over the nation. Newspapers and magazines ran large, graphic photos of creatures with mislocated eyes, extra legs, no legs, and other spooky damage. Environmentalists and reporters warned grimly that the frogs were likely an early-warning alert of some broader ecological threat created by man-made chemicals, ozone thinning, global warming, radiation, or some other horror.

Now the authoritative journal *Science* has published two papers by researchers who studied the frogs carefully. The scientists' conclusion: The abnormalities stem from natural parasite infestations. Tiny flatworms are burrowing into tadpoles and causing developmental abnormalities. This is occurring in many frog species, in many states, it is entirely natural, and poses no danger.

Like so many environmental scares, however, this reassurance has not been nearly so well reported in the media as was the original alarm. And the reaction of environmentalists has ranged from silence to stubborn refusal to accept that there is no frog-deformity emergency. Do you suppose there is a parasite that can burrow into a person's brain in such a way as to make him prefer to be in a constant state of panic?

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THEY WANT IT DIRTY

As concern spreads over the prevalence of pornography on the Internet, the increasingly loony-left American Library Association (ALA) is blocking practical solutions. It ferociously opposes all efforts to install software filters to protect children and others wishing not to encounter obscene material in public libraries. The association's latest counter-proposal is that libraries simply install "privacy screens" around all library Internet terminals. Critics say this will just turn public libraries into private peep shows.

It will also do nothing to protect children from sickos. David Burt, a librarian bothered by the ALA's resistance to filtering, released a report documenting 503 disturbing incidents involving on-line pornography in public libraries. (Available at www.filteringfacts.org/da-main.htm.) In one example, a mother who briefly left her seven-year-old in the children's room of a suburban Denver public library returned to find her daughter seated at a computer terminal displaying an image of male frontal nudity, with a stranger beside her who had exposed himself to her.

Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Representative Robert Franks (R-N.J.) are currently sponsoring a bill, the Children's Internet Protection Act, which would require public schools and libraries that receive federal subsidies for Internet access to either install filtering software or use a "clean" Internet service. Don't expect librarians to solve this problem themselves.

THE PEOPLE SPEAK

Zogby International recently polled likely voters for the Cato Institute, asking for opinions on Social Security privatization. Certain results were predictable; for example, more Republicans favor privatization than Democrats, and the young favor it more than the elderly. But some findings challenge conventional assumptions. For one thing, a majority of African Americans, Hispanics, and union workers now favor some degree of Social Security privatization. In fact, African Americans and Hispanics are *more* likely than whites to support this reform—and for good reason.

In the case of African Americans, the simple fact is that, with an average male life expectancy of 66, many will end up paying into the current system and receive almost nothing back. A private retirement account, however, could be inherited by heirs. Among Hispanics, many have personal ties with nations (such as Mexico and Chile) that have had recent success with private retirement accounts. Also, Hispanic voters, perhaps from having experienced government corruption in other countries, are less trusting of the state providing for them in the future.

Social Security privatization is no longer just a pipe dream. It's an idea with growing appeal to minorities, the young, and the blue-collar. Americans are making their opinions heard. It's up to Washington to listen.

GALLOWS HUMOR AT THE CINEPLEX

Have you heard the one about the Holocaust?

If not, you haven't been to the movies as of late. After the phenomenal success of last year's *Life Is Beautiful*, which turned a concentration camp into a vaudeville stage, this fall's *Jakob the Liar* seeks to bring its own heartwarming sense of humor to the Holocaust. Does a film in which two characters trade mordant wisecracks even as a noose rests

THE MERRY THINKSTER

Herbert Stein, who died recently at 83, was not just another economist. He had become a preeminent social commentator, able to capture large truths almost offhandedly. He once attributed America's economic success, for example, to the fact that "100 million people get up every morning to do the best they could for themselves and their children." This was vintage Stein, not just a pithy phrase but a penetrating insight. The system flourishes because its basic beliefs—usually taken for granted—encourage people to strive.

Stein had many convictions but few dogmas. He once cheerfully confessed membership in the "don't know" school of economics—a recognition that economics can't settle many basic political and social questions.

Born in Detroit, Stein won a scholarship to Williams College and received his doctorate from the University of Chicago. Beginning in 1938, he worked for a variety of governmental agencies, including the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the War Production Board, and in 1944 and '45 served in the Navy as an ensign. In 1945, he joined the Committee for Economic Development, a business research group, where he opposed a rigid faith in balanced budgets. But Stein deplored unlimited deficits, which, he said, merely sanctified "the political attractiveness of taxing less and spending more."

President Nixon appointed Stein in 1969 to the Council of Economic Advisers, which he chaired between January 1972 and August 1974. Stein later said that adopting wage and price controls in August 1971 was "Nixon's one serious mistake of economic policy." And it was a whopper. After controls were lifted, inflation leaped from 3 to 11 percent from 1972-74. Stein and most of Nixon's economic advisers opposed the controls.

After leaving government, Stein taught at the University of Virginia and thought at the American Enterprise Institute. He was best known for his essays in the *Wall Street Journal*, *TAE*, and elsewhere, in which he criticized both the Left (on, say, industrial policy) and the Right (on supply-side economics). But always he wrote with clarity and humor. Typical was his explanation of why projecting trends into the future often goes awry: "If something cannot continue forever, it will stop." He was a pleasure to read, and his genius was to raise common sense to an art form.

—**Robert J. Samuelson** *writes columns for the* Washington Post *and* Newsweek.

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"For Pete's sake! I'm all ready to go and you're not even dressed yet!"

"From the Wall Street Journal—Permission, Cartoon Features Syndicate"

lazily around one of their necks ultimately trivialize a staggering tragedy? Or could it memorialize the event afresh?

This question faced the makers of *Jakob the Liar*, as it earlier faced the makers of *Life Is Beautiful*. That film, masterminded by Italian comedian Roberto Benigni, is an audacious attempt to wring forth a sense of freedom from pain. Its success suggests it struck a universal nerve, one linked to both laughter and tears.

Jakob the Liar's virtues are obvious and simple, but it is a much better film than most reviewers expected. Robin Williams stars, and if the Williams of *Jack, Patch Adams,* or *What Dreams May Come* had shown up—that twinkle-eyed, crinkly-faced panderer of sentimentality—it would have been the movie's downfall. But as Jakob Heym, a recent widower in Nazi-occupied Poland, Williams gives a richly understated performance. Unlike *Life Is Beautiful* there's not a pratfall to be found. The humor here is mostly bitter and rarely sweet, the kind of alienated jesting that often bubbles beneath the hand of oppression.

"That's how we survived," intones Jakob's opening voiceover. "Those were the things that kept us going. Everything else the Germans had taken."

The film portrays one specific way Jakob and his neighbors nurtured their downtrodden spirits: After accidentally catching a bit of news on a German officer's radio, in which he learns of Russian victories in Poland, Jakob proceeds to pretend that he has his own radio hidden at home. His daily reports, fictitious but billed as the real thing, infuse the ghetto with hope. Yet even as his news curbs the number of suicides, Jakob becomes increasingly uneasy. What will happen if his tales of promise never come true?

As the story, taken from a novel by Lodz ghetto survivor Jurek Becker, slowly and deliberately unfolds, the mawkishness is kept to a minimum. Instead, most of the movie proceeds with a grim sense of wit, echoed in the dank yet delicate imagery captured by French director Peter Kassovitz. The film's quintessential moment may be its opening one, when Jakob chases a newspaper as it floats like an errant kite in the wind, only to watch the page perform a lovely dance around a scaffold on which three of his dead neighbors still hang.

Such an image combines devastating realism and wondrous lyricism in a way difficult to reconcile. But at this point in history, it may be more valuable to try to wrap our minds around an event such as the Holocaust in a new way, rather than just absorb another conventional retelling that, no matter how respectful, is just a bit too easy to digest. Re-imagining the horrors of World War II has been done before and will be done again, from Art Spiegelman's graphic novel *Maus*, to this November's limited U.S. release of *Train of Life*, a French film said by some to have inspired *Life Is Beautiful*. If any of these works strike you as flippant responses to what just might be our century's defining tragedy, consider that each of them—including *Jakob the Liar*—obeys the one command that Holocaust survivors give to future generations: Never forget.

—**Josh Larsen** *is a* TAE *contributing writer.*

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CHAOS

Under the headline "Women's Fight Disrupts Neighborhood," the *Syracuse Post-Standard* recently described a local women-only street brawl. Police determined that the fight broke out when the daughter of one of the participants was harassed by a group of females while on her way to a store. The battle eventually involved 15 women throwing rocks and glass bottles at each other.

You've come a long way, baby.

DEAFENING SILENCE

The White House recently announced that Terry McAuliffe (who helped the Clinton-Gore administration concoct the idea of renting out the Lincoln Bedroom for campaign contributions) had made it possible for Hillary Clinton to run for a New York Senate seat by depositing $1.35 million in cash as security for the mortgage Mrs. Clinton needed to establish residency in Chappaqua, New York. Public outcry eventually overturned this arrangement. But what's surprising is that this massive "loan" to the President and First Lady brought no response from the most visible champions of campaign finance reform (all of whom claim to be non-partisan). Here's what they each told *TAE* when we asked for their comments on the sweetheart deal:

Activist group	Self-proclaimed mission	Comment on McAuliffe gift
Common Cause	"Represents the unified voice of the people against corruption in government and big money special interests"	"Nothing issued in writing"
Public Campaign	"Dedicated to sweeping reform…aims to dramatically reduce…the influence of big contributors in American politics"	"No official comment"
Center for Responsive Politics	"Tracks money in politics, and its effect on elections and public policy"	No public statement; "outside our area of expertise"

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HILLARY, THE Un-IMA

A computerized newspaper search for the word *Hadassah* is sadly revealing. The name of this once-thriving Zionist women's organization now turns up most often in obituaries. The organization's shrinking size and the demographic profile of its active members (more than half are over 61) have not escaped the notice of Hadassah's leadership. Expanding beyond their longstanding charitable work for medical and educational causes, the group's leaders have become increasingly involved in politics in hopes of attracting younger activists.

So at this year's annual convention, Hadassah honored Hillary Clinton with its highest award for her "work with children and families." Hadassah didn't pick the First Lady for rolling up her sleeves to help real children and families as Hadassah's founder, Henrietta Szold, had. (Szold helped drain malarial swamps and bring sanitation to Palestine; then singlehandedly organized the rescue of thousands of children from Germany in the years before the Holocaust.) Rather, Mrs. Clinton was selected as a symbol of the political causes Hadassah has come to support over the last 20 years.

Beginning with the Equal Rights Amendment in 1979, the organization has taken up causes its founders never imagined. It has lobbied to oppose school vouchers, block voluntary prayer in public schools, expand "hate crimes" legislation, widen gun controls, and, particularly, to remove restrictions on abortion.

There is nothing in Henrietta Szold's life to suggest she would have supported such policies. She was a pious and learned Orthodox Jew who would have had a hard time imagining an "unwanted" child. She personally welcomed each boatful of Jewish children she brought over from Nazi Germany, serving as a surrogate mother to hundreds of them. Her fond nickname was "Ima"—Hebrew for "mother."

Mrs. Clinton's thoughts on Israel have fluctuated with the domestic political climate. She has raised money for groups affiliated with the Palestine Liberation Organization while the PLO was still a terrorist organization, and touted the need for a Palestinian state with a capital in Jerusalem. She has been called "an outspoken enemy of Israel" by former Szold Award recipient Rachel Lewin, the founder of a nursing school in Jerusalem.

That none of this deterred Hadassah's current leadership from honoring the First Lady reveals that in their minds Zionism has taken a back seat to something a lot less idealistic, though trendier: Feminist politicking.

—**Naomi Schaefer** *is an assistant editor at* Commentary, *and a lifetime member of Hadassah.*

PROSELYTIZING THE FAST CROWD

The Methodist Church—specifically, its Western North Carolina Conference—now sponsors a race car in the Legends circuit. Just as on the cars sponsored by Winston cigarettes, Tide laundry detergent, and Busch beer, their 115 MPH vehicle is painted with the Methodist logo, along with the number for a 24-hour prayer line. Driver Sam Beam is a Presbyterian, however.

NOT SO ROTTEN KIDS

More hints that young Americans are not as troubled as sometimes suggested in the media:

A poll of teenagers across the nation commissioned by Shell Oil asked them to list the top pressures they face. Results were released as school opened. Expecting sex or drugs to top the list? Wrong. The largest group (44 percent) cited "the pressure to get good grades" as their main concern. Next was "getting into college" (32 percent). Pressure to use drugs or alcohol was cited by 19 percent, and pressure to be sexually active was mentioned by 13 percent.

"I'm worrying about my future," 16-year-old Californian Ashley Mitchell told the Associated Press. "That's a lot more important than worrying about whether to drink at a party."

Meanwhile, on a campus kids are striving to get to—Colgate University—a student-driven campaign has resulted in the instituting of an Academic Honor Code. Fully 78 percent of students voted for the code in a referendum last spring, many of them after a Rutgers professor brought to campus to describe his studies of various campus honor codes reported that students at schools with honor codes do indeed engage less in dishonest behavior.

As a result, all incoming Colgate students will be required to sign a pledge that they will represent themselves truthfully, claim only work that is their own, and work honestly in all academic assignments. Junior Kristie Canegallo says she expects the code "to foster an atmosphere where honesty and integrity are discussed and revered." The Colgate vote is part of a nationwide movement toward honor codes.

BABY PARTS FOR SALE

Recently, a petite midwestern medical technician came to an abortion research group called Life Dynamics to present a troubling story. Pro-choice herself, and still working for her company at the time (she's since left), she testified under the pseudonym "Kelly" in a videotape screened by *TAE*. *TAE* also reviewed a large collection of accompanying documentation and spoke with other individuals with knowledge of this field to corroborate the accuracy of what follows.

Kelly worked for a firm that went into late-term abortion clinics to collect and dissect aborted fetuses—in order to procure "high-quality" fetal parts for sale. "What we did was to have a contract with an abortion clinic that would allow us to go there on certain days. We would get a generated list each day to tell us what tissue researchers, pharmaceutical companies, and universities were looking for. Then we would examine the patient charts."

"We only wanted the most perfect specimens that we could give to the researchers.... We were looking for eyes, livers, brains, thymuses, cardiac blood, cord blood, blood from the liver, even blood from the limbs." Only an estimated 2 percent of the late-term aborted babies Kelly saw had abnormalities. Each week she saw "probably 30 or 40" babies of

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around 30 weeks gestation. "There was a high demand," she added.

The company "shipped by UPS, FedEx, Airborne" and other couriers. Did the shippers know what they were transporting? "No. All they knew was that it was just human cells. But it could be a completely intact fetus. It might be a batch of eyes, or 30 or 40 livers going out that day, or thymuses." (An employee at one of the "procurer" firms explains in a phone conversation surreptitiously taped by Life Dynamics that shippers don't like delivery labels to list "arms and legs and things that are identifiable," so euphemisms like "tissue" should be used instead.)

Why did Kelly tell her story? One day, "a set of twins at 24 weeks gestation was brought to us in a pan. They were both alive. The doctor came back and said, 'Got you some good specimens—twins.' I looked at him and said, 'There's something wrong here. They are moving. I don't do this. This is not in my contract.' I told him I would not be part of taking their lives. So he took a bottle of sterile water and poured it in the pan until the fluid came up over their mouths and noses, letting them drown. I left the room because I could not watch this."

But she did go back and dissect them. "That's when I decided it was wrong. I did not want to be there when that happened." Then it happened again and again. "At 16 weeks, all the way up to sometimes even 30 weeks, we had live births come back to us." And then? "Then the doctor would either break the neck or take a pair of tongs and beat the fetus until it was dead."

Did the abortionist ever alter the surgery to provide the specific parts you needed? "Yes, before the procedures they would want to see the list of what we wanted to procure. The [abortionist] would get us the most complete, intact specimens that he could. They would be delivered to us completely intact. Sometimes the fetus appeared to be dead, but when we opened up the chest cavity, the heart was still beating." Was the type of abortion ever altered to provide an intact specimen, even if it meant producing a live baby? "Yes, that was so we could sell better tissue. At the end of the year, they would give the clinic back more money because we got good specimens."

It's technically a felony to traffic in fetal tissue for money, but companies may charge "fees for service," authorities tell *TAE*. In a taped conversation, Brenda Bardsley of Anatomic Gift Foundation, a parts-trafficker headquartered in Maryland, confessed to Mark Crutcher of Life Dynamics, who posed as a potential buyer, "You don't buy the tissue. I mean, yeah, it's the way it works out, but you're not really buying the tissue...what you're buying is the service of us getting it to you the way you want it." (For more on the commercial nature of the business, see adjoining box.)

Federal agencies also sometimes involve themselves in this trade. While confirming the details of this story, *TAE* noted that the Web site of the National Institutes of Health includes this notice: "Human embryonic and fetal tissues are available from the Central Laboratory for Human Embryology at the University of Washington. The laboratory, which is supported by the National Institutes of Health, can supply tissue from normal or abnormal embryos and fetuses of desired gestational ages between 40 days and term. Specimens are obtained within minutes of passage and tissues are...processed according to the requirements of individual investigators."

CUT-THROAT COMPETITION

A full-color, glossy brochure invites abortionists to "find out how you can turn your patient's decision into something wonderful." It is printed by Opening Lines, Inc., a wholesale trafficker in fetal parts from abortion clinics. Working out of an office in West Frankfort, Illinois, the company's director, Dr. Miles Jones, profits from a tremendously lucrative trade. His current "Fee for Services Schedule" offers eyes and ears for $75 and brains for a mere $999.

Opening Lines was founded in 1989 to "maximize the utilization of fresh fetal tissue we process." It offers researchers "the highest quality, most affordable, and freshest tissue prepared to your specifications and delivered in the quantities you need when you need it."

The sale of human tissue, including fetal tissue, is against federal law, but Opening Lines advises [abortion clinics] how "simple" it is to get around that. It offers to "lease space from your facility to perform the harvesting...to offset your clinic's overhead." It also offers to train clinic staff in harvesting and then, "based on volume, reimburse part or all of your employee's salary, thereby reducing your overhead."

Dr. Jones is obviously adept at getting around inconvenient regulations. "We *do not* require a summary of your research, and you *are not* required to cite Opening Lines as the source of tissue when you publish your work (we believe in word of mouth advertising; if you like our service you will tell your colleagues)."

Opening Lines is one of two wholesale fetal-parts traffickers uncovered by Mark Crutcher of Life Dynamics Inc. The other is the Anatomic Gift Foundation. Founded in 1994 by Jim and Brenda Bardsley, it originally operated out of a double-wide trailer at the end of a dirt road on the Satilla River in Georgia, where the couple also ran a catfish farm. It has since moved its headquarters to Laurel, Maryland, and now has branch offices in Phoenix, Arizona, and Aurora, Colorado.

Life Dynamics' sources inside abortion clinics acquired "fee schedules" for both organizations. Opening Lines is the more detailed of the two. An "intact trunk (with/without limbs)" costs $500; a liver is $150, but there is a "30% discount if significantly fragmented."

"Our daily average case volume exceeds 1,500 and we serve clinics across the United States...." Dr. Jones is an aggressive salesman, eager to offer reduced rates for bulk orders.

—*From the* Alberta Report, *Alberta, Canada, August 23, 1999*

Postscript: On September 10, Opening Lines suddenly cleared out of its facility, leaving no forwarding information, apparently after a local news story exposed their previously secret operation, West Frankfort police chief Brett Hall tells TAE.

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By Karl Zinsmeister

Indicators

THE ROD *AND* THE HUG

In recent books (*Spare the Child*) and articles (*New York Times Magazine*), the childrearing styles of conservative Christians have been portrayed as harshly authoritarian. Research by a Princeton scholar and former Brookings fellow concludes that this is inaccurate.

In a series of groundbreaking studies based on data from the National Survey of Families and Households, W. Bradford Wilcox finds **today's conservative religious "subculture is characterized both by strict discipline and an unusually warm and expressive style of parent-child interaction."** Conservative religious parents aren't "authoritarian," he concludes. Instead, their childrearing style ought to be understood as "authoritative," typically being "characterized by consistent and firm discipline *and* high levels of warmth and parental responsiveness."

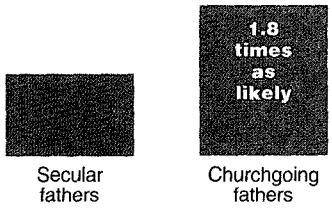
In a study published in the *American Sociological Review*, for instance, Wilcox reports that **"parents with conservative theological beliefs are more likely to praise and hug their children** than are parents with less conservative theological views." Analyzing data from approximately 4,500 homes, Wilcox discovered that "the odds of praising and hugging one's child 'very often' are [two-and-a-half times] higher for a parent with the maximum score of 5 (a strong theological conservative) than for a parent with similar sociodemographic characteristics and the minimum score of 1 (a strong theological liberal)."

In a subsequent paper, Wilcox finds conservative Protestants **less likely to yell at their children** than other parents.

In a third study—the first quantitative research ever done using national data on how religion affects fatherly involvement with children—Wilcox examines four areas of father-child interaction: Time spent playing or working together one-on-one; the father's weekly dinner attendance; the father's involvement in school activities, youth groups, or sports teams; the father's involvement in religious youth groups. He discovers that **"Catholic and conservative Protestant fathers are more involved with their children than secular and mainline Protestant fathers,"** and that **"the most important predictor of paternal involvement in the lives of children is church attendance."**

Hands-on dads

Likelihood of participating in child's non-religious youth activities (sports, Scouts, etc.)



Source: W. Bradford Wilcox, "Religion and Parental Involvement, " Annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, August 7, 1999.

In response to recent cultural decay, "the conservative Protestant subculture began devoting a great deal of attention to what it saw as the seedbed of emotional life: the family," says Wilcox. The result, is "a neotraditional parenting style that spares neither the rod *nor* the hug." And this distinctive parental style seems to account for the fact that "youths from conservative religious backgrounds are less likely to experience academic failure, teen pregnancy, and substance abuse."

WELFARE KILLS

A few years ago, the Acton Institute staged a conference in Washington, D.C. where a former alcoholic who now runs a homeless program in Denver vividly described how welfare entitlements give the men he is trying to rescue the financial means to avoid facing their addictions, ultimately causing many of them to drink and dope themselves to death.

Over the last few years, a few academic studies have quietly surfaced confirming that point. One, for instance, showed that cocaine abuse (and resulting hospitalizations) spike upward right after federal disability checks are mailed out.

Now comes a major article in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. Three researchers from the University of California at San Diego did a computerized analysis of all U.S. deaths over a 16-year period, and found that **on the first days of each month (when most government welfare payments arrive) death rates jump upward in categories related to substance abuse**—like liver disease, homicide, suicide, and auto accidents. The researchers calculate that **in a typical year this accounts for 4,320 extra deaths.** This fatal surge of government-check-related binging is particularly pronounced among non-whites, they find.

The authors call for "limiting the amount of discretionary income available for drugs and alcohol," with the lead author suggesting that "if the federal government were to deliver support in the same way that private agencies do, in the form of food, clothing, and shelter, there would be less deaths."

Uncle Sam buys a fix

Excess annual deaths first 7 days vs. last 7 days of each month

4,320

Source: Phillips, Christenfeld, and Ryan, "An Increase in the Number of Deaths in the U.S. in the First Week of the Month," *New England Journal of Medicine*, July 8, 1999.

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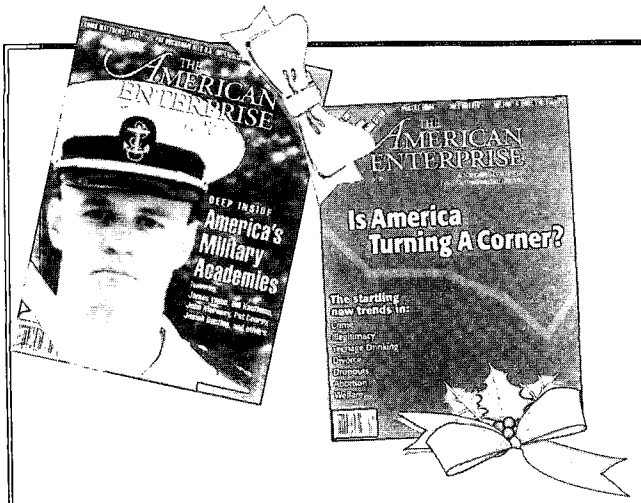

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THE AUTHORS OF A GROUNDBREAKING BOOK SAY THE STOCK MARKET WILL SOAR OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS. A PROMINENT ECONOMIST SAYS HE DOUBTS IT.

Where Are Stock Prices Headed?

Kevin Hassett and James Glassman

Since 1982, the Dow Jones Industrial Average has climbed from 777 to above 11,000. Including dividends, the stock market as a whole has produced returns of more than 2,000 percent over this period. But, throughout this entire spectacular rise, financial experts on Wall Street, in the media and in academe have continually warned that stocks were already dangerously overvalued, or, at best, "fully valued."

From a traditional vantage point, stocks do now appear expensive. But what if traditional methods for valuing stocks are no longer valid? We believe the share price surge of the past two decades demonstrates not the insanity of investors but the inadequacy of the old stock pricing models.

Experts measure stock prices against particular yardsticks of history—especially price-to-earnings (P/E) ratios and dividend yields—and pronounce current prices far too high. But, over the past two years, your co-authors have developed another way to value stocks, and this model indicates that today's prices remain far too *low*.

How low? Our analysis finds that the proper value for the Dow is 36,000—today, not 10 or 20 years from now. Based on our model, P/E ratios of 100 (three to four times current levels) are justified for the market as a whole. In March 1998, we laid out our theory in an article in the *Wall Street Journal*. The Dow at the time was 8,782. Then in the summer, with the Dow at 7,500, we began writing our book. By the summer of 1999, the Dow had breached 11,000.

What's our logic? We begin with the two simple components of any investment—risk and return. Historically, stocks have provided a much higher return than alternative investments: an annual average of 11 percent over the last 73 years, compared with less than 6 percent over that same period for Treasury bonds.

Normally, one asset delivers a higher return than another because it is riskier. For example, relatively secure AT&T bonds were paying interest of 6.7 percent this year, while the bonds of Chesapeake Energy, a more shaky company, were paying 12.3 percent. The riskier company was forced by the market to pay that extra return—called a "risk premium"—in order to attract lenders.

Kevin Hassett is a resident scholar and James Glassman the DeWitt Wallace Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. Dow 36,000 is the title of their just-released book. (To obtain a copy, see page 77.)

Lawrence Lindsey

My friends Jim Glassman and Kevin Hassett have proposed the very provocative idea that a fair valuation of the Dow Jones Industrial Average is 36,000, not the current 11,000. We should all wish that they are right. Owners of American equities would be roughly $25 trillion richer, the equivalent of almost $100,000 for every man, woman, and child in the U.S. By most standard rules of thumb, this would result in an additional $750 billion in spending, and logically, about $200 billion in additional federal tax revenue. We could easily cut taxes, increase both defense and domestic spending, and retire the national debt. We would be a land of both enormous private wealth and public prosperity.

So, it would be rather churlish to say that the Dow should not be 36,000. Suffice it to say that the Dow is NOT at 36,000. History clearly indicates that some day the market will indeed reach 36,000. The real question is how quickly. In the last 40 years, the Dow has risen 7.4 percent per year. If it repeats this record over the next 40 years, the Dow will be approaching 200,000. On this performance, it will hit 36,000 in around 2016, or 17 years.

Why won't it get there much sooner? It's true, all that would be needed is for the next five years to be about as good as the last five. Hitting 36,000 in five years would require a 27 percent annual increase. The Dow currently stands 27.5 percent higher than its average level of last year, and in the last five years the Dow has had average annual growth of 23.7 percent.

Why is a repetition of the last five years in the next five unlikely? In my view, the most fundamental reason has to do with what economists call "time preference," which is measured by the real interest rate in a society. Stated simply, time preference measures how much someone has to be paid in terms of future consumption in order to give up current consumption. Time preference has been roughly constant for several hundred years at between 3 and 6 percent.

If people think that they are going to receive more than a 6 percent real return on their money, they will sacrifice current consumption and borrow all they can, in order to make an investment. If they think that they will only get a 3 percent real re-

Former Federal Reserve Board governor Lawrence Lindsey is a resident scholar at AEI and a chief economic adviser to Governor George W. Bush.

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HASSETT/GLASSMAN continued

But for stocks, there has always been a problem—known among economists as the "equity premium puzzle"—about the relationship between risk and return. When you look at data going all the way back to the nineteenth century, you find that stocks are really not any riskier than bonds in the long run. While the returns of stocks fluctuate from year to year, this volatility is canceled out over longer periods. Bonds, which can drop precipitously in value if inflation increases, have proven to be very risky investments in comparison.

In his book *Stocks for the Long Run*, Wharton School professor of finance Jeremy Siegel presents mounds of evidence on this subject and concludes, "Although it might appear to be riskier to hold stocks than bonds, precisely the opposite is true: the safest long-term investment for the preservation of purchasing power has clearly been stocks, not bonds."

PEOPLE ARE CATCHING ON TO THE TRUE NATURE OF STOCKS—THEIR RELATIVE LACK OF RISK AND THEIR FANTASTIC RETURNS. THE ACCOMPANYING SURGE IN DEMAND WILL DRIVE STOCK PRICES HIGHER.

For example, Siegel looked at every 20-year period from 1802 to 1997 and found that the worst such stretch for stocks produced average real (after-inflation) returns of 1 percent a year; for Treasury bonds it was *minus* 3 percent. "Stocks," he wrote, "in contrast to bonds or bills, have never offered investors a [negative] yield over periods of 17 years or more."

The puzzle that has baffled economists is this: Why should stocks produce returns that are so much higher if they are no more risky than bonds? The best explanation is that people have been irrationally fearful of stocks. They watch the short-term ups and downs and myopically lose sight of the fact that, in the long run, returns have been remarkably consistent—and positive. This fear has translated directly into share prices: Since many potential buyers shied away, stock prices were too low.

Our research suggests that the key to understanding the bull market of the past 17 years and, especially, the current run-up in stock prices, is to recognize that people are finally catching on to the true nature of stocks—to their relative lack of risk over time and to their fantastic returns. The accompanying surge in demand has driven stock prices higher and higher.

When will it end? The model developed in our book indicates that irrational fear would be completely priced out of the market today, leaving stocks to produce the same returns as competing investment options, if the Dow rose immediately to 36,000. To put it another way, though the irrational fear of

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LINDSEY continued

turn or less, they will forgo saving for tomorrow and will concentrate on consuming today.

If we could assure people that the Dow would keep rising at a 27 percent annual rate, most Americans would borrow all they could and invest it in the market. Home equity lines, available at 9 percent, would be an easy and profitable source of credit. Indeed, it would even be rational to run up credit card balances and pay an 18 percent rate to the bank or credit card issuer in order to put money into the market.

Now comes the real problem. If a 27 percent appreciation in the Dow was generally expected, who would provide the funds at 9 percent for a home equity loan or 18 percent for a credit card loan? Lenders would begin to demand the same rate as they could get in the market. The only remaining source of funds would be for people to cut back on their spending, while keeping their income the same. But if this were to happen companies would soon find that they weren't selling as much as they had expected. Profits would fall.

Then the already stretched price-earnings ratios in the market would become even more extreme. As disappointing earnings reports began to accumulate, investors would no longer be willing to pay as much for equities. This would bring equity prices back into line, and the dream of a Dow zipping to 36,000 would evaporate.

IF A 27 PERCENT APPRECIATION IN THE DOW WAS CONTINUALLY EXPECTED, WHO WOULD PROVIDE THE FUNDS AT 9 PERCENT FOR A HOME EQUITY LOAN OR 18 PERCENT FOR A CREDIT CARD LOAN?

How can one explain the recent five-year surge in the market? Evidence from the flow of funds in the economy as well as the anecdotal conversations at cocktail parties suggests we Americans are doing exactly what the theory of time preference says we will. We are borrowing like crazy. The personal saving rate has fallen from roughly 6 percent in 1992 to a negative 1.4 percent in the last quarter. We are running up our credit cards and second mortgages as fast as we can. Corporations are doing the same by issuing debt and using a good portion of the proceeds to buy back their own stock or acquire other firms.

Further, we have found people willing to lend to us—foreigners. At present we are borrowing from them at an annual rate of $300 billion. It is an open question how long this will go on. At present trends, our annual rate of borrowing from foreigners will have to rise by $200 billion per year in order to keep the current expansion going. That means nearly $500 bil-

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HASSETT/GLASSMAN continued from page 19

stocks is beginning to dissipate, people are still too reluctant to own them, and the effect of this lower demand is to depress prices to about one-third their true fundamental value.

Eventually, we believe that the risk premium—that extra return investors demand for holding stocks instead of bonds—will fall from today's roughly 3 percent to roughly zero. That is where it should be according to historical analysis of actual stock market risks. And recent developments like better monetary management, the reduction of national security threats, and the resurrection of American business make this a more reasonable assumption every day.

In arguing that stocks are currently overvalued, many analysts, especially those citing stock "mania," imply that the risk premium will return to its higher levels of the past. In other words, the attitudes of investors toward risk, which have become more rational over the past two decades (and especially the past five years) will again become less rational. Could that happen? Well, yes. But we firmly believe that people have the capacity to learn.

And, while it makes sense to be skeptical when you hear someone (like us) claim that "this time it's different," the truth is that sometimes, it is different. Things change. For example, for three decades after the Crash of 1929, stocks had dividend yields that were greater than Treasury bond yields. Those high dividends were necessary, analysts believed, to compensate investors for the extra risk in stocks. Then, in 1958, dividend yields dipped below bond yields. Traditionalists screamed that the market was overvalued and urged investors to pull out of stocks. But the yield kept falling, and never again exceeded the bond yield.

Investors in the late 1950s came to realize, almost in a blinding flash, that stocks were not as risky as they had thought and that a dividend that grew as profits grew was far better than the static yearly payout from a bond. As a result, they did not need the extra enticement from high dividends. This new realization caused investors to bid up stock prices sharply, to a permanent new level. From 1940 to 1957 the P/E ratio never exceeded 15 in any single year. Since then, it has exceeded 15 in a majority of years.

In the 1980s and 1990s, a similar process of rethinking began as investors started looking at stocks through a different lens. That process will continue, and as it does, the old valuations based on historical rules of thumb will come to be rejected.

When observers say that "history" dictates certain results, they really mean a particular perspective on history. Karl Marx, for example, viewed history as class struggle, picking and choosing events and nations to make his case. By focusing on such indicators as P/Es and dividend yields, the current generation of observers sees only part of the picture—and it is badly distorted, as the soaring market of recent years confirms.

Our theory provides a plausible alternative explanation for the bull market. Is it the right one? We certainly think so, though we would be happy to see other explanations. One thing is for sure: The old paradigm can't explain the new facts. Like Marxism, it should be relegated to the ash heap of history.

LINDSEY continued from page 19

lion of borrowing by the end of 2000, an additional $700 billion by the end of 2001, and by 2004 with the market nearing 36,000 an annual inflow from abroad of $1.3 trillion. Could this happen? It is theoretically possible, but unlikely.

There is a second reason that the previous five years of stock market boom will not be repeated in the next five years. It has to do with the cycle of creative destruction that Joseph Schumpeter and others described earlier this century. When someone gets a good idea—a new technology, or the idea for a new product—the individual or company that introduces this innovation reaps enormous profits. Attracted by these high returns, money flows into the industry. As the innovation travels, however, prices must begin to fall to attract more and more buyers. In addition, competition from other companies may emerge, further driving down profits. In the end, when the new product becomes well established in the economy its profitability becomes no higher than returns elsewhere.

Thus, the new technologies of the 1990s produced very high returns for the firms which first discovered how to exploit them. But as competition emerged, profits and share prices of the new technology companies began to decline.

Furthermore, there is often a "destruction" side to the arrival of new technologies. Some are not wholly new but replace existing ways of doing business. For example, most of the sales of merchandise on the Internet are not net increases in sales; they replace transactions that would have taken place in a standard store setting. Thus the owners of traditional retail firms and shopping malls should see declines in profitability and share prices as the Internet companies see rises in theirs. And the value of the U.S. stock market derives not just from its winners and new technologies, but also from its declining older technologies as well.

An additional issue over the next five years is that the new technologies could be deflationary, as they tend to represent lower cost ways of doing existing activities. Generalized deflation tends to depress stock markets. It is unclear at present whether the world is entering a generalized deflation, but it is certainly a risk.

So, a Dow at 36,000 seems quite unlikely to occur in the next five years, however much we may all hope for such. History is not encouraging when looking for sustained periods when share prices increase far faster than the historic time preference for money. When they do move sharply out of line, a period of painful readjustment often follows to bring consumption and saving rates back into equilibrium.

The process of creative destruction suggests new technology share prices that have recently risen rapidly could fall later, as the new technology becomes more commonplace and the destruction of old technologies begins to show up. Based on this experience, my bet is that five years hence the Dow will be a lot closer to its current level of 11,000 than to 36,000.

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RONALD REAGAN'S OFFICIAL BIOGRAPHER HAS FINALLY FINISHED HIS PORTRAIT OF AMERICA'S FORTIETH PRESIDENT. THE BOOK IS CONTROVERSIAL IN FORM, AND MONUMENTAL, COMPLEX, AND IMAGINATIVE IN SUBSTANCE—THE VERY QUALITIES THAT IMBUE HIS SUBJECT, THE AUTHOR INSISTS.

Edmund Morris

The long-awaited Dutch: A Memoir of Ronald Reagan *by Edmund Morris is presidential biography that reads more like a Herman Wouk novel. The widely condemned fictionalizations the author added have become the focus of early reviews. Lost in this controversy is the fact that, in its totality, the book presents Reagan as a great statesman.* Dutch *isn't just the story of a former movie actor who made Americans feel good about their country again after Vietnam, Watergate, and the Carter malaise. Nor is it about the economic policies that made the '80s and '90s roar. It's the tale of a President who was better at that job than most observers ever imagined, and whose role in winning the Cold War was—to use the vernacular of his old profession—Oscar-caliber.*

Edmund Morris, 59, was born in Nairobi, Kenya, and became an American citizen in 1979. President and Nancy Reagan selected him as official Reagan biographer in 1985, offering their full cooperation while knowing they wouldn't see any of the manuscript until publication. TAE *associate editor John Meroney visited Edmund Morris at his home on Capitol Hill for the author's very first print interview.*

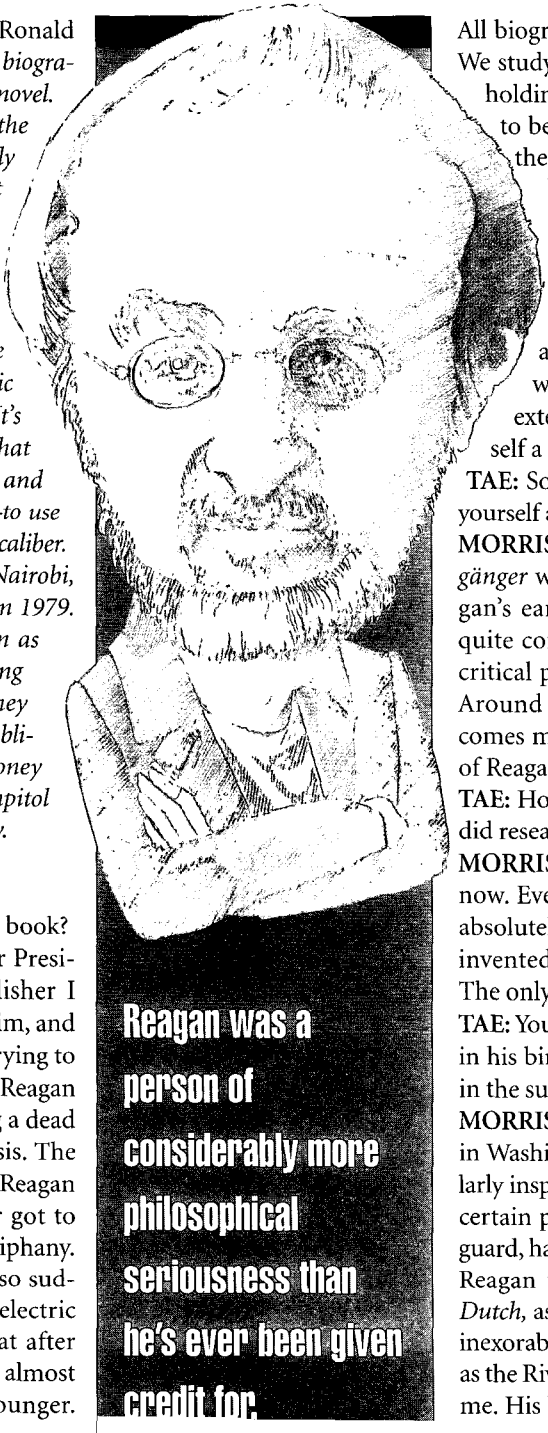

Illustration by Lucinda S. Levine

TAE: Why did it take so long to write this book?

MORRIS: I really didn't start until after President Reagan retired. I'd told my publisher I wanted to try to make literature out of him, and since I'm not a political writer, I found trying to write an orthodox political biography of Reagan impossibly difficult. I knew I was writing a dead book, and I went through a creative crisis. The reason I had such difficulty was because Reagan had lived almost 75 years before I ever got to know him. Then in fall 1992 I had an epiphany. It was an intense moment of discovery, so sudden and violent I remember getting an electric shock taste in my mouth. I realized that after several years of deep research I was, in an almost occult sense, *there* when Reagan was younger.

Reagan was a person of considerably more philosophical seriousness than he's ever been given credit for

All biographers experience this to some degree. We study photographs with passionate interest, holding them up to our faces almost wanting to be absorbed in them, trying to recapture the reality of lost times. We fondle locks of hair of dead people. We read letters of dead people where one can sense the movement of the hand across the paper. I realized I knew as much about Reagan during his college days as I did about him as President. So the idea I had was to simply personify that mind and extend my own life backward to make myself a contemporary of Ronald Reagan.

TAE: So you took the unusual step of inserting yourself as an invented character in the story.

MORRIS: Yes, I constructed the life of a *doppelgänger* who could plausibly interact with Reagan's early life in such a way that they never quite connect, but he's always able to observe critical points in Reagan's pre-presidential life. Around 1964, this ghostly person actually becomes me, because that's when I became aware of Reagan as a political phenomenon.

TAE: How did that approach affect the way you did research and interviews?

MORRIS: It didn't. This has been a secret until now. Everything the narrator sees and hears is absolutely authentic and documented. I haven't invented any thoughts, speeches, or anything. The only invention is that of the narrator.

TAE: You wrote much of the Roosevelt biography in his birthplace so you could immerse yourself in the subject. Where was this book written?

MORRIS: About half in Los Angeles and the rest in Washington. These locations weren't particularly inspiring, but I was tremendously moved by certain places. Laurel Park, where he was a lifeguard, haunts me to this day. In fact, the theme of Reagan the lifeguard is a major metaphor in *Dutch,* as is the Rock River, which symbolizes the inexorable, onward course of Reagan's life, as well as the River of Life. Eureka College, too, fascinates me. His birthplace in Tampico, Illinois, obsesses

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me. I have an account of going to his birthplace with him after he left the White House in 1992, just before he began to lose his wits. We went up these narrow stairs into the room where he was born, a room that he'd never been back to since 1911. Here I was, a biographer taking his subject into the room where the subject was born. It was moments like this, so transcendentally strange, that made me adopt this technique. The relationship between the biographer and the subject, particularly when the subject is as strange as Ronald Reagan, is something I find more inspiring and interesting than politics.

TAE: Why do you refer to him as "Dutch" throughout the book?

MORRIS: Because his name was Dutch Reagan until he went to Hollywood in 1937. His father nicknamed him that because of his "Dutch boy" haircut. The only person in Illinois who called him Ronald was his mother. So since this book tells the story of this great and mysterious man coming from supremely ordinary origins in the middle of the corn country of Illinois, I think of him as that. As the story progresses, and Reagan becomes more public and important, the narrator begins to call him "Reagan." And during the presidency, except in intimate passages where I'm in the office with him, he is generally referred to as "Reagan" or "the President."

TAE: In pictures of Reagan as a boy, you say you see a distance in his face.

MORRIS: Well, what I recognize is the fact that he was a cogitative person. Dreamy. He was always drifting off because he had this extremely active imagination. He was like that as an old man, too. And I understood this most fully when I looked at these pictures. Reagan's brother, Neil, who went through the same family traumas, never had that look; he was just a regular coarse Illinois boy. Ronald Reagan was always somebody apart, even as a child.

TAE: Was Reagan's success inevitable?

MORRIS: No, he was different. Dutch struck everybody who knew him through his mid-thirties as an extremely nice but rather ordinary person. Theodore Roosevelt, FDR, and practically any President you name were aware from early on that they were something special because they were all vain. Reagan was never vain. Here's a man with overpowering id, but no ego. Therefore, he didn't have a reason to make other people think he was special. But people did notice certain things about him, like the fact that he was always a tumultuous talker. At the age of 17, when he first went to college, he finds himself being selected to articulate the essence of a student strike on behalf of the entire freshman class.

Reagan's imaginative side is so strong, life-long, and intricately related to his political power. That's what created the vividness with which he saw SDI, and his certainty that Communism was a fragile castle.

TAE: You had unprecedented access to short stories Reagan wrote when he was young. What insight did they give you?

MORRIS: They reinforced my suspicion that he was primarily an imaginative person. Some of his teenage writings are superior to those of Theodore Roosevelt in terms of imagery and originality; they're actually quite impressive. All the stories revolve around a character very much like himself. There's almost always this tall, good-looking, tan, rather aloof, dreamy-eyed man the girls go crazy about. But he's always somewhat distant.

TAE: You think it's almost eerie that one of the stories bears a resemblance to Reagan's 1940 picture *Knute Rockne-All American* because Reagan wrote it long before Rockne and Gipp were even famous.

MORRIS: Yes. Thrusting through the story is this overpowering, hard, uncompromising morality. He had a precocious sense of what was right. And he had that from age 11.

TAE: How did that come about?

MORRIS: I describe in detail his discovery that his father was an alcoholic, and within weeks of that, he discovered a now-forgotten belief called Practical Christianity, a branch of the Disciples of Christ which was very popular in the late 'teens and 1920s. He found it by reading a book called *That Printer of Udell's,* an inspirational Christian novel, probably very hard for us to read in this day and age but at the age of 11 it transformed him. The central character is a tall, good-looking, genial young man who wears brown suits and has the gift of platform speaking and comes to a midwestern town just like Dixon, Illinois, and brings about a reform of its welfare system. The streets are full of hobos, bums, and layabouts, and he figures out a workfare program to solve the city's social problems. He marries this girl who looks at him adoringly with big wide eyes through all of his speeches, and he eventually goes off with her to represent the city in Washington, D.C.

TAE: That's a thumbnail sketch of Reagan's life.

MORRIS: Yes, after reading it, he went to his mother and said, "I want to be like that man, a Practical Christian." That's when his moral sense developed.

TAE: Did you interview Ronald Reagan's first wife, Jane Wyman?

MORRIS: No, she's never talked to any journalists.

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TAE: What's the reason for that?
MORRIS: It's her nature. She and Ronald Reagan agreed when they divorced in 1948 that they wouldn't discuss it. And they've kept that promise almost faithfully. Jane's nature is that she eliminates everything that's finished. Michael Reagan told me, "My mother divorces people. She divorces her husband and never speaks about him again. She divorces a film when she leaves it. She divorces the past."
TAE: Since Wyman was a key figure in his life, what did you do?
MORRIS: I interviewed everybody who knew them, including the children.
TAE: Was Ronald Reagan once really a liberal?
MORRIS: Oh, a passionate liberal. At one time in 1938, he made steps to join the Communist Party. He spoke to friends who were in the Party, but they talked him out of it because Party executives realized Reagan just wasn't Communist material. He was too open and honest, couldn't keep secrets, and wasn't the type. So they discouraged him and he never joined. But that gives you an example of how far left he was.
TAE: Did President Reagan himself reveal that to you?
MORRIS: I found out about this through several unimpeachable sources. But I zapped him with it one day. I put my face up very close to his and asked, "Did you try to join the Communist Party, Mr. President?" I watched his eyes to see if there was any flicker at all. There wasn't, and he said, "No."
TAE: How did Reagan's involvement with the Communists in Hollywood shape the rest of his life and his political ideology?
MORRIS: In the late '30s, Communism appealed to him because he was intensely idealistic. He wanted social change, and he was an ardent New Dealer. Immediately after the War, within months of leaving the Army, he saw how Communists infiltrated this rogue union, causing all the labor violence in post-war Hollywood over a period of two or three years. Reagan's disillusionment with Communism was total and instant, and it made him a conservative.
TAE: Reagan was an informer for the FBI when he was in Hollywood. Did he ever have any qualms about that?
MORRIS: None whatsoever. He had this passionately moral sense that the ones he named weren't evil people bent on destroying the United States—they were souls to be saved. He didn't inform because he wanted to imprison or persecute these people; it was in the spirit of total honesty. He wasn't someone who could dissemble and hide; he knew what he knew and stated it truthfully.

The diary is incontrovertible proof he didn't have Alzheimer's in the White House. The entry on the final day of his presidency is just as lucid, logical, and clear as it was on the day he was inaugurated.

TAE: The period of the late '40s also gave Reagan a new perspective on life. He almost died from pneumonia and spent months immobilized with a broken leg.
MORRIS: He also had to adjust to the first great trauma in his life, which was that his beloved wife had walked out on him because she found him boring. For an actor to be found boring is the worst thing you can imagine. Then there was the loss of their daughter. He also had to reconcile himself to his diminishing looks and star power. That period was the nearest Reagan every got to a personal crisis, but he was such a strong man with such inner motivation and sense of self that he survived it. And in November 1949, as he would frequently say to me, "Along came Nancy Davis and saved my soul."
TAE: Did you ever try to talk to Reagan about his days as a bachelor?
MORRIS: He was very shy about it. I'm a bit of an anomaly amongst biographers, I suppose, because I think a man's sex life is his own business—unless he wants to make it a public issue. Reagan was private about his and is entitled to that. Which is not to say I'm not extremely interested in it. A biographer wants to know everything. But I got enough from him and other people to write about it in a way that I think is informative and tasteful.
TAE: In 1947, Reagan and Jane Wyman had a baby born prematurely, whom they named Christine, and she lived only three days. Did Christine Reagan's death shape Ronald Reagan's attitude toward abortion?
MORRIS: He never specifically told me that he was pro-life because of the death of his daughter. But I don't think any man could go through that kind of trauma without being affected by it. His mature attitude toward abortion came about in 1967, when he was governor of California and signed the most liberal abortion bill in the country, the Therapeutic Abortion Act of 1967. He went through agony and regret because he found it was being abused by young women as a form of birth control. And he changed his attitude on abortion 180 degrees within months of that and remained a foe for the rest of his life.
TAE: Reagan always said, "I was dragged kicking and screaming into politics." True?
MORRIS: Don't believe a word of it. It was quite obvious from the age of 17 onward that Reagan

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was compulsively drawn to politics and politicking. His idea of paradise was to get up on stage and orate.

TAE: Did Reagan really believe the Cadillac-driving welfare queen stereotype was true?

MORRIS: Yes. I think it's safe to say everything Ronald Reagan said, he believed with all his soul—even if you could demonstrate 99 times in succession it was nonsense. Reagan believed it because he believed it. And that's one of the penalties of having an overridingly imaginative nature. An imaginative person believes all his fantasies, he believes the stories he writes and the parts he plays.

TAE: How did he view the end of the Cold War?

MORRIS: Here the complete absence of ego is obvious. With the single exception of the Strategic Defense Initiative—which he would talk about by saying, It was my dream, my idea—Ronald Reagan never took credit for anything. He was so profoundly fatalistic and deterministic in his thinking about Communism that when the Soviet Union collapsed, he regarded it as the simple justice of history. The fact that he himself might have participated in this cosmic event never would have occurred to him. He just didn't have that kind of vanity.

TAE: Which career did President Reagan enjoy the most: acting or politics?

MORRIS: He didn't make much distinction between the two. He got more satisfaction out of his political life because the rewards were so much more practical.

TAE: Reagan kept a diary as President. How reliable is it?

MORRIS: Ronald Reagan was a 100 percent honest person. In fact, he was the most honest man I think I've ever studied.

TAE: When did the Alzheimer's begin to affect his mind?

MORRIS: I would use the diary as incontrovertible proof he didn't have Alzheimer's in the White House. He wrote in it copiously, almost daily, and the entry on the final day of his presidency is just as lucid, logical, and clear as it was on the day he was inaugurated.

TAE: So what's at work when he introduces himself to his own son Michael during his high school graduation ceremony?

MORRIS: This congenital aloofness and lack of curiosity in the individual human being. Idiosyncrasies of character didn't interest him. His thing was large, abstract issues. As far as he was concerned, his children were almost interchangeable. His daughter Patti Davis writes about this very movingly in her own book, *As I See It.* She says her father would have this perplexed expression on his face when young Ron would walk into the room—you could see Daddy trying to figure out which of his children this was.

TAE: You've described the letter Reagan wrote announcing his Alzheimer's disease as transparently honest and courageous. How do you know that letter wasn't ghostwritten?

MORRIS: I've looked into the composition of that letter in detail, and I can tell you that everybody involved in it has convinced me that it was indeed Reagan's own writing. In fact, I can see him in every word of it. He was reluctant to write it, but had to because a San Diego newspaper was about to publish the news that he hadAlzheimer's. So it was necessary to have a preemptive letter written in his own hand, which would be his last message to the American people.

TAE: In the early '80s, Patti Davis brought the nuclear freeze activist Dr. Helen Caldicott in to meet her father in an attempt to convert him to their cause. Reagan was not amused.

MORRIS: He was not "Mr. Sweet-natured Nice Guy." He was capable of real, hard anger. So to have his own daughter walk in and advise him on nuclear policy was an affront to his dignity and to the strength of his beliefs.

TAE: The historian Robert Ferrell told me his view of Dwight Eisenhower changed when he was given access to Ike's diaries.

MORRIS: The Reagan diaries are impressive. Arthur Liman, who prosecuted Iran-Contra and saw huge extracts from them, agrees with me. And a member of the Iran-Contra Congressional Committee who is a lifelong liberal Democrat and had always despised Reagan as a low-brow, told me that seeing the diaries completely changed his attitude. He realized he was dealing with a truly well-equipped and thoughtful president.

TAE: You say in late 1985 you and the President's aides feared Reagan wasn't up to the first summit with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. But the moment you saw Reagan—"this giant, gliding, blue-suited, unbelievably self-confident man," as you describe him there—walking over to meet Gorbachev—"awkward, short, rather dumpy, heavily overcoated"—it was all over. You and everyone else knew who would dominate.

MORRIS: What we saw coming down the steps to meet Gorbachev was this massive self-certainty. When Reagan greeted him and they looked into each other's eyes, I believe Gorbachev saw this pale blue sky in Illinois, this huge insular self-certitude. I asked Gorbachev this and he actually said, "I saw bright, blue sky." In my prologue I talk about going out to the corn country where Reagan was born, walking amongst the stalks, looking out toward the horizon. There's complete silence, except for the rustling of the leaves and windmills. Flatness. Huge sky. Nothing else. Reagan carries that fixed, flat centeredness to this day.

TAE: You had great access to Reagan and were over in the corner taking notes in all kinds of meetings, even ones where the strategies for dealing with the Iran-Contra scandal were being discussed. Is it fun to be a fly on the wall?

MORRIS: Oh, yes. Absolutely fascinating.

TAE: Were there ever times when you wanted to speak up and had to restrain yourself?

MORRIS: (laughs) Well, never when he was with Congressmen. Sometimes, though, in senior staff meetings there were times when I really wanted to interject.

TAE: About what?

MORRIS: When they were talking about the President's life and I knew more than they did. But I thought if I ever interjected myself in the White House business, I would compromise myself. So I never did. I never even drank coffee.

TAE: Was there a particular advisor in Reagan's inner circle who was the most impressive?

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MORRIS: Oh, yes. Bill Clark.
TAE: "Judge Clark," as he was known. He was Reagan's chief of staff as governor, and later in Washington was his National Security Advisor and Secretary of the Interior.
MORRIS: Clark was so private, quiet, and unflamboyant that he's now largely forgotten. But he's the most important and influential person in the first administration, and in fact the only person in the entire two terms who had any kind of spiritual intimacy with the President.
TAE: Explain what you mean by "spiritual intimacy."
MORRIS: Reagan and Clark are more or less the same kind of man. They're both aloof, westerners, and horsemen. And taciturn. It may surprise you to hear me describe Reagan as taciturn. In public, he was very garrulous, but when he was alone, at the ranch or on horseback, he was a man of very few words. He and Bill would go riding together for six hours, and they would just grunt at each other.
TAE: You describe Ed Meese, counselor to Reagan and later attorney general, as "Dutch without the mystery."
MORRIS: Meese is not a huge character in the book. He shows up in 1964 when he's the young district attorney who busts the Free Speech Movement and subsequently joins Reagan's gubernatorial administration. He's presented simply as an avuncular rock-hard ideologue.
TAE: In 1984, a story surfaced about how Reagan may have told Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir that he had been a Signal Corps photographer who was at the liberation of the Nazi death camp in Buchenwald. But in reality, Reagan never left the U.S. during that time. Did he claim to you that he had been there?
MORRIS: No. He told me the same story that he told Secretary of State George Shultz, that he simply processed the film and was one of the first in the U.S. to see it before it went to the Pentagon, and how he was devastated by it. I absolutely believe him, but I also absolutely believe he would have said something like that to Shamir because to Ronald Reagan, perception and imagination are the same as reality.
TAE: Do you fault him for that?
MORRIS: No, I don't. His feelings about the Holocaust were absolutely genuine.
TAE: When President Reagan was preparing his speech announcing SDI (aka, "Star Wars"), you report that Shultz, who thought SDI was a "cosmic joke," warned him that parts of the speech represented a revolution in U.S. strategic doctrine and that he should change it. But Reagan wouldn't budge. Was this level of tenacity in the face of advice from one of his top cabinet officers typical?
MORRIS: It depended entirely on the concession. On the whole he was very flexible. You could always get him to sign off on a change of policy if it wasn't important to him. But if it was, then he was as immovable as the Rockies. On SDI, abortion, and his attitude about the Evil Empire, he was completely immovable.
TAE: Who was more enjoyable to write about: Theodore Roosevelt or Reagan?
MORRIS: Roosevelt, because I didn't have any creative agonies about him. There were times doing the Reagan book that I thought my head was going to blow open. I had periods of block, too, which I wouldn't wish on my worst enemy. I never had that with T.R. And that's simply because Reagan is so mysterious, and T.R. was so up front.
TAE: What period of Reagan's life was the most enjoyable to research and write about?
MORRIS: I liked writing about the final presidential years the most. The Bitburg episode, where he struggled with whether to go to a place where Nazi S.S. were buried, and then what he said at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp—"All these children of God, here they lie, never to hope, never to pray, never to love, never to heal, never to laugh, never to cry."—was a human and political drama of great magnitude.
TAE: How do you think Nancy Reagan will react to this book?
MORRIS: Well, her primary interest is the consolidation of her husband's presidential reputation as a great man. I have come to the conclusion that he was a great man; so I think she's going to like it.
TAE: There's an incongruity between Reagan, this deeply religious man, and Reagan, the one who didn't attend church when he was President. He had said that because of the security he needed, going to church would be disruptive for other worshipers.
MORRIS: That's part of it. I think another aspect is that he was an extremely private person and didn't like the idea of being ogled while he prayed. Prayer to him was always an extremely private business; he would tend to go off into a corner and sort of mumble to himself in moments when he required prayer. But as soon as the Reagans returned to Los Angeles, they began to go to church again regularly.
TAE: Reagan always celebrated family values but some of his children say he was a mediocre father at best. Was he a hypocrite?
MORRIS: Hypocrisy implies guile, and Reagan had no guile. He was of that generation that regards the upbringing of children as largely woman's work, and he was by nature a statesman who felt the interest that he should give ought to be to the American people as a whole. Insofar as he was paternal, it was toward the entire country. This is a feature which is characteristic of statesmen. Teddy Roosevelt, FDR, and Churchill were exactly the same.
TAE: What's the biggest revelation in *Dutch*?
MORRIS: That Ronald Reagan was a massively substantial person of considerably more deliberation and philosophical seriousness than he's ever been given credit for. He was deeply thoughtful in his private life, and had an intense imagination. Reagan's imaginative side is so strong, life-long, and so intricately related to his political power. That's what created the vividness with which he saw SDI, and his certainty that Communism was a fragile castle that would crumble. And that's truly impressive.

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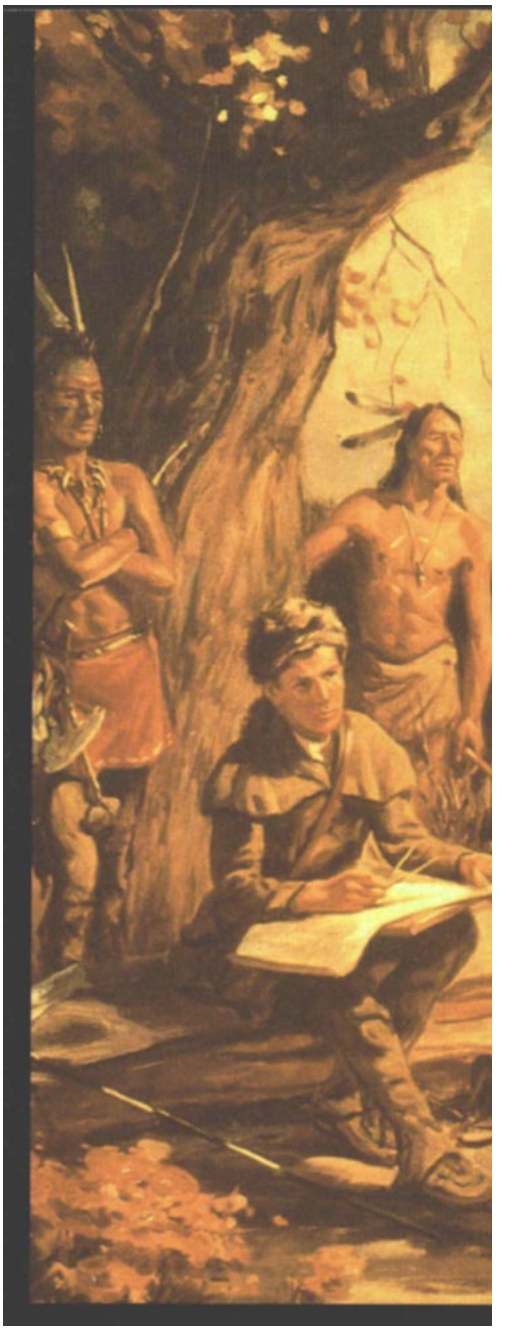
AMERICA'S

Essential Revolutionary

Exactly 200 years ago this December 14—
two days after enduring one of his daily horseback rides in an icy rain—
George Washington died of a throat infection in his bed at Mount Vernon.
To mark the bicentennial of Washington's passing,
we present two essays that sketch the character of America's greatest—
and only essential—revolutionary founder.



THE FORGOTTEN GEORGE WASHINGTON

By Richard Brookhiser

GEORGE WASHINGTON, my psychoanalyst wife observes shrewdly, appeals to small children and to mature adults, but not to adolescents. Because he is neither crazy nor funny, the adolescent mind has trouble with Washington. Mature adults come to appreciate him again. That's why the made-up story about Washington and the cherry tree is unkillable: Parents like it, and so do their young children. But not adolescents. So how do we account for the fact that many of the men who revered him as their leader in war were teenagers? Perhaps teenagers were not adolescents then.

Today, on the other hand, even Americans well beyond their teenage years often remain essentially adolescent; so Washington's reputation does not shimmer as it once did. Therefore I want to emphasize some aspects of Washington's character that we moderns tend to forget or misunderstand. I'll discuss, in turn, Washington as a man of charisma, as a gentleman, as a hero, as a politician, as a thinker, and as a skeptic.

"Charisma" originally meant the qualities of saints. Now it refers to qualities which compel our attention. A charismatic man is someone to whom attention must be paid. Today we associate charisma with athletes and entertainers; the most charismatic man in America today is probably Michael Jordan—at least at the moment he retired from basketball. But we have to remember Washington had that kind of charisma throughout his life.

He was a person who drew the eyes of everyone in a room when he entered it. One of the doctors in the Continental Army noted that when Washington was riding with his staff there could be no doubt who the Commander in Chief was, even to strangers at a distance.

In part, this charisma was a function of his stature. He was measured at 6' 3" when he died. He also carried himself well. "Noble" and "commanding" are words that come up over and over in descriptions of him. John Adams grumped that the Continental Congress chose him as Commander in Chief because, like the ancient Hebrews, they wanted a leader who was a head taller than the other Jews. Abigail Adams, when she first met Washington, wrote to her husband, John: "You had prepared me to entertain a favorable opinion of him, but I thought the one *half* was not told me." She went on and on in this gushing tone, which could not have improved John Adams' frame of mind.

Washington was an excellent horseman. Thomas Jefferson said he was the best horseman of his age, and Jefferson was both an excellent horseman himself

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and a Virginian, which meant he took this kind of thing seriously. Washington also had an ability to use his appearance dramatically. He saw his first play when he was 19 years old, and whenever he had a chance he went to the theater or any kind of performance, including the circus. He admired both Shakespeare and Joseph Addison's play *Cato,* and he once paid a man who was exhibiting an elk to come up to Mount Vernon to show it to him. Play-going shaped his notion of how he presented himself. He was always playing the role of George Washington. He was a character actor whose character was himself.

The most famous instance of his acting in real life was his performance at Newburgh in 1783. The officers in the Continental Army hadn't been paid, as usual. The war was now ending. An appeal went through the camp which said, in effect, if this is how you are being treated when you still have your swords, how will you be treated after peace is signed? If you want to be paid, you must threaten Congress.

Washington called a meeting of the officers, leaving it unclear whether he would attend. When the meeting began, he was not present. In due course he showed up as if on cue and proceeded to read an impassioned appeal to the officers' sense of duty, insisting they must not let themselves and their country down. When he was done, he took out a letter from Congress which would show that Congress, however slow, was not ill-willed. But he did not start reading immediately; he shuffled the paper. Then he took out his reading glasses and said, "Gentlemen, you will forgive me. I have grown gray in your service, and I find I am growing blind as well."

Washington did not stay for the vote. He knew you do not step on a line like that. After he left, the officers voted unanimously to do whatever he wished.

Washington as a gentleman is something we neglect, perhaps because so few of us are gentlemen ourselves. Washington had to practice gentlemanly behavior because he had a tremendous temper. We have forgotten this aspect of

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him, though anyone who knew him knew he could be testy, even as a teenager. Lord Fairfax wrote his mother that he was an excellent surveyor, but added, "I wish I could say that he governs his temper." When he was President, someone brought an anti-administration pamphlet to a Cabinet meeting which described Washington's being guillotined. Jefferson recorded that Washington got into "one of those passions where he cannot contain himself," and quotes the rolling fury of his complaints.

The one time he lost his temper in public was at the Battle of Monmouth in 1778, when he rebuked General Charles Lee at a moment of maximum stress. All his work over the last year in drilling his army and making it a professional force seemed to be at risk because of Lee's conduct, and the evidence suggests he exploded. Certainly Lee thought so.

He was capable of wrath, yet he almost always held it back. His first training in self-control came from *The Rules of Civility,* a collection of 110 rules for young gentlemen compiled by French Jesuit priests in the 1590s. They were translated into a number of European languages, and somehow an English copy got to Virginia in the 1740s. Washington copied them into a notebook, now in the Library of Congress, along with geography lessons and assorted legal forms. In part, writing them down was a penmanship exercise, but the main reason he copied the rules was to learn and internalize them.

These are points of etiquette, not obvious moral precepts in the style of Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac. The Rules of Civility* do not reveal what they're up to right away. They tell you how to walk, how to talk, how to dress, how to eat. But when you think about them, you realize they are exercises in attention. They tell you you are not alone in the world, but surrounded by people whose sensibilities you must consider. You cannot do the first thing that comes into your head. These are not guides for "self-expression" or "authenticity."

My favorite is rule 13, which starts off quaintly, but becomes very serious. "Kill no fleas, lice, ticks, et cetera, in the sight of others. If you see any filth or thick spittle on the floor, put your foot dexterously upon it. If it be upon the clothes of your companions, put it off privately. And if it be upon your own clothes, return thanks to him who puts it off."

Privately is a very important word. It means you do not go up in public to someone with filth or thick spittle on his clothes and say, "Oh, you've got filth on your clothing. Let me help you off with that." You do not do that, because it would embarrass him, and so you do it privately. On the other hand, if someone helps you, you may feel upset and embarrassed—but it doesn't matter. What you're feeling is not the most important thing. You have to thank the man who brushes your clothes off.

This rule was useful to Washington, apart from controlling his temper, because his range of acquaintance was wider than that of any other Founder. He knew officers, generals, and privates; Frenchmen and Englishmen; Yankees and Southern planters; frontiersmen and Quakers. He dealt with Indians who were enemies and Indians who were allies; with blacks who were slaves, who were freeman, and who were his own soldiers. His ability to deal with all of them was founded in his training in these rules.

Considering Washington as hero, I was struck by a lecture of John Keegan, the English military historian. Keegan said he thought there were four men who understood warfare in North America (which was different from warfare in Europe because North America is larger, making the geographic points that control space more important). Keegan thought the four experts were Samuel de Champlain, Ulysses Grant, Benedict Arnold, and George Washington. Fortunately, Washington understood it better than Arnold.

It is often said against Washington that he lost more battles than he won. This is true. But war is not the World Series. It's not the best out of seven. You don't have to win every battle you fight or be the best general who ever lived. All you have to be is better than the generals you are facing. If you are better than they are, if you figure out sooner than they what the strategic situation is, you will win the war, and that is what Washington was able to do.

The other important thing about his generalship is the effect it had on his men. To understand this, we have to look at soldiers' memoirs. A lot of these were written in the 1830s when Congress offered bonuses to veterans, providing they first described what they had done in the war. So these old men wrote accounts of what they did in which Washington appears occasionally, sometimes in unexpected places.

The most moving vignette I have found is by an old man writing in a newspaper in the 1830s. He was in a Rhode Island unit that fought in the battles of Trenton and Princeton. Washington had won the Battle of Trenton, but the British were going to retake the town, which Washington anticipated. So he put most of his army outside town, across a stream, while he held Trenton with a small force. Their job was to fire at the British when they came, then retreat across the stream, back to the main army. The British came at dusk. A fighting retreat is a hard thing to do, because it's paradoxical. You are leaving the field, but you're still supposed to be resisting as you go—a psychologically delicate operation. This man, a teenager at the time, doesn't say he was panicked, but you can tell he was on the edge of it.

There was only one bridge over the stream, and as his unit was hurrying across it, he saw that Washington had posted himself on the other side, to oversee the retreat. All the while there was an artillery duel going on between the British and the Americans on either side of the creek. As he crossed the bridge, he was jostled against Washington's boot and the flank of his horse. He remembered—50 years later—that the horse was as firm as the rider and seemed to know that he was not to quit his station. What the man did not say is that, at the moment of contact, he also knew this because Washington's presence gave him a sense that all was not chaos, that the battle was under control. And so he was able to escape with his unit and fight again another day.

Those little encounters mattered enormously to Washington's troops. Heroism is showing up, being where you ought to be. When you lose, which will happen much of the time, maybe most of the time, you keep showing up again and again and again, until you finally prevail. That was what Washington was able to do and to convey as Commander in Chief.

We don't like to think of Washington as a politician because we don't

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He was a person who drew the eyes of everyone in a room when he entered it.

like our politicians, but Washington knew how the game was played and was quite good at it. When he was a teenager, his elder half-brother Lawrence ran for the Virginia House of Burgesses, and George saved the vote count. He even alphabetized it. Why? So he could use it again next time. This shows a very precocious interest in politics. When he first ran for the House of Burgesses himself, the question of treating voters to drinks on election day came up. Although this was technically illegal, every candidate did it. Washington could not be at the polling place, but he had a friend who was, in effect, his campaign manager, and we have their correspondence. This is what Washington gave to the voters on election day: 28 gallons of rum, 50 gallons of rum punch, 38 gallons of wine, 46 gallons of beer, and two gallons of cider, probably hard. That adds up to 160 gallons of booze. Since there were 397 voters, that works out to a little less than two quarts per voter. Washington's only complaint to his friend was that he had not spent enough. Washington won.

Washington had a very practical understanding of office-holding as well as elections. He spent 16 years in the Virginia House of Burgesses. This is why, at Newburgh in 1783, he knew that Congress should not be distrusted, because unlike many military men, he'd been on the other side. He knew how legislatures worked, and he knew that when they didn't work, it wasn't because of malice. Things take time. When he explained this to his men, he spoke with authority.

It is hard for scholars and intellectuals to appreciate Washington as a thinker. Washington makes it hard for us. In a letter to his aide David Humphreys, Washington called his own education "defective." Humphreys had gone to Yale, while Washington had never gone to college. He had the least formal education of any other President except Andrew Johnson.

He remedied the defect by reading all his adult life, particularly about politics and political controversy. This was at a time when writing on politics was the best it has ever been in this country, and some of it was among the best ever in the world. Washington read everything that came off the presses. He knew many of the authors; sometimes they were writing for him; and he had an ability to pick their brains and make use of their learning.

One intellectual politician he didn't resemble was Viscount Bolingbroke, an eighteenth-century English statesman responsible for many of the phrases still found in American politics. Bolingbroke's analysis of the checks and balances of the British constitution influenced the French thinker Montesquieu, who in turn influenced our Constitutional Convention. Bolingbroke also devised, for example, the "Patriot King," the leader above politics and parties who comes in and fixes everything—an idea invoked by Ross Perot and Colin Powell.

The only problem is, Bolingbroke didn't mean any of it. He was a scoundrel. He wanted some sovereign to hire him and was trying to "spin" himself a career. Washington was the opposite—not churning out journalism, but thinking seriously about the issues that confronted him.

Finally, Washington was a skeptic, something very hard for Americans to accept, because we don't like to think of ourselves as skeptics. Washington saw a paradox in the doctrine of natural rights. He believed the rights of man had an eternal importance, but he did not believe founding a government based on those rights would be easy. He occupied an odd position, and you see this most clearly in his first farewell address, the "Circular to the States," which he sent to the governors in 1783. He was stepping down as Commander in Chief of the Army, and as far as he knew, it was his farewell. He didn't know he would come back later as President.

There is a very arresting paragraph in the "Circular." It's only three sentences, describing the situation of America at the moment of its independence. The first sentence is a catalogue of blessings: natural resources, extent of territory—it goes on and on. The second sentence, also quite long, enumerates the blessings of the social situation: We have revelation, manners, science; we have access to the thoughts of previous philosophers. Once again, all these advantages pile up. If this were a convention speech or a Fourth of July speech, you would expect an uplifting send-off in the third sentence, but he doesn't do that. It's a short sentence in which he says, If with all these advantages, the people cannot be "completely free and happy, the fault will be entirely their own."

That sentence is like hitting a speed bump. He is saying, I have done all I can; this generation will do all it can. But the rest is up to you. It's up to the American people. It's up to the future, and it's up to us.

Richard Brookhiser is the author of Founding Father:Rediscovering George Washington *and editor of* The Rules of Civility. *This is adapted from his contribution to* Patriot Sage, *forthcoming in December from ISI Press.*

AMERICAN CINCINNATUS

By Bruce S. Thornton and Victor D. Hanson

To the classically educated contemporaries of Washington, his resignation of his military commission in 1783 to return to farming immediately evoked the Roman hero Cincinnatus—who in 458 B.C. was called from his plough to save the nation, immediately thereafter surrendering the dictatorship and returning to his three-acre farm, becoming the exemplar of simple rural virtue animated by duty rather than power. The year Washington resigned, Philip Freneau wrote a poem which enthused: "In Vernon's groves you shun the throne, /Admir'd by kings, but seen by none." Lord Byron in his "Ode to Napoleon" called Washington the "Western Cincinnatus." Artists also made the equation: two paintings now lost, by John Trumbull and Charles Wilson Peale, as well as sculptures by Houdon and Canova, depicted Washington as the Roman valiant.

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This identification of Washington with Cincinnatus is not hard to explain. To eighteenth-century Americans, each hero embodied a dual ideal: that of the citizen-farmer, and that of the citizen-soldier. Both men were nourished on farms, both men expressed their republican virtue by leading a just war, not for glory but for their country's freedom.

Ninety percent of Americans at the time of our founding were farmers, including the first several presidents. The life, experiences, and virtues of farming—frugality, simplicity, hard-work, duty over self-indulgence, autonomy, and self-sufficiency—saturated the intellectual milieu of the Founders. Like the Romans, who for much of their history were small farmers, the Founders believed the qualities that make a good farmer also make a good republican soldier: not a hireling, but a militiaman willing to risk his life for the good of the nation.

In addition to fostering republican virtues, farming generated profit and wealth, uniting the benefits of moral improvement with the prerogatives of financial security. Early Americans lived in an uncertain, harsh world, and knew that material prosperity was necessary to support the nation's freedom. They were great experimenters in agriculture, recognizing that improvements would bring both private and public progress, eliminating hardship and the seeds of disorder.

Washington's formative years were spent on his father's two farms: the Ferry Farm on the Rappahannock and then Epsewasson (later Mount Vernon) on the Potomac. Washington spoke little of his less-than-genteel childhood, but we can deduce from the realities of frontier agriculture in colonial America that he learned much from his experience. Though covering thousands of acres, the Washington farms in the early-eighteenth century were not the elegant plantations of later times. Rather, they were tenuous islands of order amidst unfathomable weather, previously unknown plants and animals, and frontier forests inhabited by Indians. American farming required hard work, persistence, independence, hardheaded practicality, stamina, and a wide range of skills, all of which George absorbed.

Washington repeatedly expressed his love of farming. Towards the end of his days he wrote to the Earl of Buchan that farming was "at all times the most pleasing occupation of my life." In a letter to Alexander Spotswood he exclaims that "to see plants rise from the Earth and flourish by the superior skill and bounty of the laborer fills a contemplative mind." After his second term as President, Washington rejoiced that "I am once more seated under my own vine and fig tree, and hope to spend the remainder of my days. . . making political pursuits yield to the more rational amusement of cultivating the earth."

Washington was an "improving" farmer, one who believed that superior technique based on scientific knowledge would increase productivity and profits. Many works on husbandry reside in the library at Mount Vernon. His letters to his London agents frequently requested the "newest, and most approved Treatise of Agriculture," books with frankly utilitarian titles like *A New System of Agriculture, or a Speedy Way to Grow Rich.* Washington was eager not just for his own improvement but hoped to set a successful example against the sloppy and wasteful practices of other farmers, "so destructive to our lands" and "unproductive to the practitoners." Irrational farming practices reduced both the wealth and the autonomy of the American states, so agricultural improvement represented for Washington a "means of attaining to that degree of respectability and importance which we ought to hold in the world."

In the 1770s, Washington inquired into the possibility of settling immigrants from Holland as tenants on his Ohio Valley lands, a scheme he said was "founded on interested as well as political views." In a letter to Thomas Jefferson, Washington suggested "regulations might be made, and such measures taken, as would render this Country the asylum of pacific and industrious characters from all parts of Europe, [and] encourage the cultivation of the Earth." Such measures could "draw the wealth, and wealthy men of other Nations, into our bosom, by giving security to property, and liberty to its holders." In this agrarian vision, material, moral, and political goods are all intertwined and mutually reinforcing.

And then there was Washington the soldier. In classical Greece and Rome, generals were usually elected officers, accountable to an elected assembly, and expected to fight alongside their men and to share their ordeal first-hand. In the entire history of the classical Greek city-state, it is difficult to find a single infantry battle in which the general survived the fighting when his army lost the encounter. The aim of the ancients was to create military commanders who embodied republican principles, men who, despite the power and prestige put into their hands, would eschew political aggrandizement.

When the Continental Congress met in June 1775 to select a Commander in Chief for the motley forces of revolution, Washington was a near unanimous choice. His long military service and distinguished record in the French and Indian Wars, his Virginian ancestry and quasi-aristocratic background as a plantation owner, and his well-known reluctance to campaign for the post—he purportedly ducked out into an adjoining library when he learned of the discussion of his appointment—made him the ideal choice to the squabbling and deeply suspicious delegates. Washington in his acceptance speech noted briefly that he did not think himself "equal to the command I am honored with," and then stated that he would refuse any compensation for his services, despite the loss of his "domestic ease and happiness" that such enormous responsibilities entailed.

Washington was immediately faced with the paradox that has historically plagued all democratic armies: how to impose necessary but inegalitarian methods of discipline on highly individualistic soldiers, and how to allay suspicions that the new disciplinarian and his crack troops might overshadow their civilian masters. In a letter to a friend, Washington wrote of the squabbling among his officers, and the lawlessness of his men, "Such a dearth of public spirit, and want of virtue...I never saw before, and pray God I may never be witness to again."

But Washington immediately sought a middle course of instilling discipline without playing the martinet, of demanding enough authority to forge an effective force, without threatening Congress. Thus at times he forgave the first offense of desertion, while on other occasions he condoned hangings and even beheadings—and submitted complete

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Serving as general of the American army cost Washington half his net worth.

reports of his actions to Congress. Washington realized that despite the sometimes fiery rhetoric, America could never rely on a spontaneous uprising of patriots to defeat a professional British army over many years. So he sought to impose a Prussian discipline on his troops. Washington would fight bitterly with his men, suffer mutinies, threaten to resign, outfox cabals of jealous peers eager to displace him, resist Congressional intervention into his authority in the field, be generally ridiculed and compared unfavorably to most of his subordinates—Europeans believed that Benedict Arnold was the far greater general—and yet win the war without once exceeding his legal authority or extending his own prescribed tenure.

In his first year of command, he was astounded at the general disorder among his some 16,000 newly enlisted recruits. Drunkenness was common; soldiers left the army at will; fighting and brawling were regular occurrences. After instituting a strict regimen of cashierings, court martials, and public whippings, Washington remarked that the general level of chaos was perhaps due to the inherent nature of the democratic experiment itself, which infected his troops with "the leveling spirit." Yet, throughout 1775 and 1776, Washington slowly forged a new army precisely in accordance with that "leveling spirit," found qualified officers, distributed uniforms and weapons, and created a new American strategic doctrine of mobility and maneuver without reliance on entrenchment. At no point in these years did Washington request greater powers, appoint officers illegally, or demand control of public funds without Congressional oversight.

Washington was surrounded by fellow officers who felt they deserved supreme command, many of whom had strong supporters in Congress. In addition, Loyalist sympathy was strong among the aristocratic officer corps and at times Washington felt he had enemies in his own camp. Between September 1777 and March 1778 half of all Washington's troops became casualties to enemy action, disease, and the weather, or simply deserted, emboldening a number of critics both in the army and Congress itself to fashion plans for his ouster. Congress continued to appoint political generals and to foist them upon Washington's command, prompting him to complain, "It will be impossible for me to be of any further service if such insuperable difficulties are thrown in my way."

In most modern armies, such treason and insubordination would have led to a general paranoia in the force, yet Washington's temperance ensured that the American army continued to function. Washington systematically weeded out disloyal officers, until at war's end he was surrounded by only two original officers who were with him in 1776—Henry Knox and Nathanael Greene.

Washington was sensitive to questions of justice. He proved a forceful advocate for officers' complaints that Congress had not paid their full salaries in accordance with their contractual terms of enlistment, and argued vehemently for complete payment of soldiers' pensions at war's end. On the controversial question of requisitioning civilian stores to provision the army—an American complaint against British troops for most of the eighteenth century—Washington proved himself far more reluctant to take from the people than was Congress itself.

By the conclusion of the war, Washington had voluntarily given up eight years of pay totaling $48,000, and unlike many of his wealthier officers, Washington never went back on his word that he would serve his country without compensation. In addition, he used his personal wealth throughout the war for supplies for his army, and lost over $5,000 a year at Mount Vernon through his absence. In total, serving as general of the American army cost Washington half his net worth.

As America's first Commander in Chief, and later her first President, Washington established our unusual balance between civilian and military authority. Previously, no modern nation had attempted to wage a war under the auspices of a democratically elected Congress. Washington thus set precedents that would characterize American experience ever after. Through the darkest days of the Civil War and the Cold War, American commanding generals would respect Washington's examples of deference to civilian authority, the right of the Congress rather than the Commander in Chief to make final all military appointments, and so forth.

Since the days of the Roman Republic, the presence of a popular military hero at the cessation of a war had always raised the possibility of a dictatorship. By the end of the war, Washington had achieved near divine status, and an appreciative country wished to grant him all sorts of extra-constitutional powers, from permanent executive office to kingship. All of these offers Washington rebuffed sternly.

Washington's military model, then, was Cincinnatus, not Caesar. His real legacy was not so much his military accomplishments but rather his demeanor and attitude toward high command in a republic. His choices stemmed from his own knowledge of classical antiquity, and from his cherished occupation as a gentleman farmer, who had a full life outside of both war and the state.

Washington lived in a harsh environment shaped by the tragic limits of human life—boundaries that were engrained starkly by his personal experiences in farming and in war. From this he learned that the world is a dangerous place, that nature and man's passions are destructive if unchecked, and that only hard work, self-sacrifice, and duty can ensure success. One wonders: without this tragic knowledge that so imbued Washington and the other founders, will the republican tradition continue to prosper?

Bruce S. Thornton is the author of The Plagues of the Mind: The New Epidemic of False Knowledge. *Victor D. Hanson's latest book is* The Soul of Battle. *This is adapted from their chapter in* Patriot Sage.

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THE

Power Broker Who Came Home

BY BILL KAUFFMAN

By long tradition, Barber B. Conable, Jr. reads the Declaration of Independence on July 4 at the Genesee Country Village.

© Lisa Scofield Photography

Richard Fenno, the foremost congressional scholar of our age, called him "the best of the breed." He consistently won the *Washingtonian* magazine poll of his colleagues as the most respected member of the House. Woodward and Bernstein gushed that "he was regarded by his colleagues as almost puritanical in his standards of personal and political conduct, a man of unquestioned integrity."

He served 20 years in Congress, most prominently as the ranking Republican on the House Ways and Means Committee; upon his retirement in 1985 he went on to be President of the World Bank. All of which equipped Barber B. Conable, Jr. with the necessary fiduciary skills to man the cashbox at our county historical society's annual yard sale.

American politicians get all mushy over the virtues of the home folks—none finer, they say. But how many ever go back to live among them? When James Madison wrote that congressmen "must descend to the level from which they are raised," he had Barber Conable in mind. For if his career was exemplary, his retirement has been even more so; he is that exceedingly rare example of a man sent forth from a people who returns to them as both wise elder and neighbor.

Barber and his wife Charlotte live in a circa 1830 hybrid Federal-Greek Revival home on Main Street in Alexander, New York, a town of barely one thousand souls that produced the late novelist John Gardner. He moves seamlessly, unselfconsciously, between two worlds: one day he is in Washington, chairing the executive committee of the Smithsonian Institution's Board of Regents, and the next night he and Charlotte are in Batavia, New York, participating in a board of directors meeting of Genesee County's Holland Purchase Historical Society. (The author is also on the board.) He is chairman of the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations; he is also a trustee of the Alexander Village Cemetery, his future home.

Conable is a first among equals in our local organizations. People are aware of his eminence, and respectful, but there is no tugging on forelocks. We elected him, after all—he *asked* for our votes and we granted his wish—and besides, no man is ever really eminent at home, where they remember when you were a runny-nosed kid playing football, or a struggling young lawyer, or the guy with the funny name.

For another thing, he is ubiquitous. He does not play lord of the manor, graciously receiving visitors who come to pay him homage. He comes to us: Conable averages better than one speech a month on local topics to local audiences. Unpaid, naturally—the assumption is that anyone who ran something called the World Bank must be loaded. These are marvels of extemporaneity; witty, learned, and discursive talks on our Indians, our pioneers, our presidents (Millard Fillmore and Grover Cleveland), our philanthropists and founders and scoundrels. (As some day regional patriots will give talks about the legendary Barber Conable, and thus will the circle be unbroken.)

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Conable is simply part of the community: a revered elder, to be sure, but one so well-circulated as to be part of our currency. He is auctioneer for local benefits; he seems always to be giving the keynote address whenever one of our towns has its 175th anniversary; by long tradition, he reads the Declaration of Independence on July 4 at the Genesee Country Village (our Williamsburg), and he does so with such vehemence that "it makes you want to strangle George III," as one museum aide says.

Most important of all, the Conables' three daughters all live within ten miles of Alexander: a striking display of filial and regional affection by children who were raised part hick, part suburban Washingtonian, and who have made the superbly sensible—if atypical—choice of rural upstate New York over Chevy Chase.

I spoke recently with Mr. Conable in his den, which is plastered not with yellowing photos of forgettable pols but with Indian artifacts: tomahawks and images of Red Jacket, Cornplanter, Handsome Lake—the natural leaders of the previous inhabitants of these parts. "Those arrowheads on that plaque my mother sewed on cardboard for me when I was 12 years old," he says.

"Why did you retire to Alexander rather than stick around Washington?" I ask. "Because it's my home," he replies, an excellent answer, if not the usual one, else Bob Dole would be in Russell and Bill Clinton would be packing his bags for Hope.

The last thing Barber Conable could have been is a lobbyist, which is the first thing he was asked to be. "There's nothing deader than a dead politician," he says. "I recall my friends Wilbur Mills and Al Ullman coming to lobby me after they had gone to their rewards one way or another, and I would duck into doorways to avoid them because they would be asking me for things that I knew they didn't believe in. They were pure mercenaries."

"I could have stayed in Washington at six figures if I had wanted to. I considered it. But they wanted a stuffed exhibit and not a lawyer, and I didn't want to be a stuffed exhibit. They wanted to use my name and put me in the firm and give me a special 'of counsel' status. At the appropriate time the senior partner would push a button and I would come into the consultation he was having with his client and he'd say, 'You remember former Congressman Barber Conable, don't you? Remember the great role he played in Ways and Means?' That image frightened me."

"Why did you retire to Alexander rather than stick around Washington?" I ask. "Because it's my home," he replies.

So instead it was home to Alexander. Though he had never really left.

Barber Conable still makes the five-mile drive into Batavia every Saturday morning to meet for coffee and donuts and gossip at Genesee Hardware. This coffee klatsch—consisting of the hardware store owner, a banker, the YMCA director, and other community pillars, several now dead—has met at 7:30 a.m. every Saturday since 1952. "We called it 'coffee with the boys,'" says Conable. "Of course everybody there is over 80 years old. I am still 'Young Conable.'"

He kept his date for coffee with the boys even during his 20 years in Congress. "I made a serious effort to remain rooted," he says, but his continued membership in the club, long after it might do him political good, suggests the strength of the tie that binds Conable to his region. He did not go to Congress because he hired a slick advertising agency and beamed commercials into the loneliest dales, urging the yokels to vote for a man they'd never met. Conable came *from* the people, and to them he has returned; like the cream in the dairies of his Wyoming County birthplace, he rose to the top by a largely natural process.

Barber B. Conable, Jr. was born 76 years ago in Warsaw, New York. His father was a county judge from 1924 to 1951; Barber's brother John succeeded him and served until 1983, which is why lawyers, including Barber's daughter Jane, now go through their motions in the "Conable Courtroom." So young Barber had a prominent surname and a strange forename. "I didn't like my name at all," he says, reciting the childish taunts of seven decades ago: "Barber, Barber, shave a pig, how many hairs to make a wig?" That sort of teasing is helpful in keeping a bright boy just far enough from the pack so as to allow the development of a critical intelligence, though in later years some constituents were sure that they were represented in Congress by a nice lady named Barbara Conable.

Conable attended Cornell, the Oxbridge of prosperous New York cowtown families, where, as a good young pacifist, he organized the America First Committee. Then war came, and he went, and between service in the Second World War and the Korean adventure he earned a law degree. When Uncle Sam let him return home, he hung out his shingle with his retired father in the nearest city, Batavia.

Young Barber jumped into civic affairs like he was auditioning for a role in a Sinclair Lewis novel. He was active in Boy Scouts, United Fund, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club (he directed "The Florine Follies" for Rotary); and in 1962 he was elected to the New York State Senate in what the Batavia *Daily News* termed "a vote-getting display that left veteran political observers gasping." Signally, he won 329 of the 346 votes in Alexander, 15 miles north of Warsaw, where he and Charlotte had settled. Thus he came into politics with the most meaningful endorsement—that of his neighbors.

Two years later, he was elected to the House despite the Goldwater debacle, and in 20 years he was seriously challenged only once, in 1974, by the peppery vice mayor of Rochester, Midge Costanza, everyone's favorite aunt. (Midge lost and went to the White House with Jimmy Carter, where she wound up in the hot-water wing.)

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Associate editor Bill Kauffman's most recent book is With Good Intentions? Reflections on the Myth of Progress in America.

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Loving & Hating the USA

The mixed Chinese view of America

By Ying Ma

"GIVE UP THE POISON of American-style fast food and cultural opium—Coca-Cola, Pepsi, McDonald's and KFC!" read one poster at Beijing University, China's premier institution of higher education. "F__k USA!" read the graffiti on a tall building across from the U.S. Consulate General in Chengdu. "Down with American Imperialism!" chanted Chinese students as they threw rocks, bottles, eggs, paintballs, and Molotov cocktails at the American embassy and consulates across China.

On May 9, 1999, American-led NATO forces bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, killing three and injuring twenty-two staff members. Though President Clinton immediately apologized for the mistake, few Chinese believed him. In the three days that followed, anti-American riots erupted in a country that Clinton had touted as America's "strategic partner."

What made this rampant hatred of Uncle Sam more surreal was that it was often mouthed by Chinese students wearing NBA T-shirts and Nike shoes, and clamoring for visas to the United States.

Only ten years ago, college students across China were protesting for something quite different: freedom and democracy, American style. Then, the posters at Beijing University called for reforms modeled on U.S. practices. The protestors at Tiananmen Square gathered to demand the resignation of top Communist Party leaders at the feet of a model they had made of New York's Statue of Liberty.

As Americans watched the Chinese riots this past May, many asked: What happened to yesterday's admiration for the land of the free and the home of the brave? And what explains the continuing eagerness of young Chinese to reach American soil, given this tidal wave of anti-American sentiments?

China is not the first or only country to develop a paradoxical mixture of love and hate for the United States. It is, however, the only place doing so at present that stands a chance of rivaling U.S. economic and military power in coming generations. And while it is clear that the communist regime was fanning the flames of national grievance and fomenting the public protests, it is also true that many Chinese people sided with their scheming government against the United States. Meriting special attention is the fact that lots of university students and intellectuals (who have been viewed as fond of American institutions and values) ended up condemning the U.S. along with others.

WHAT AMERICANS VIEW AS CONTRADICTIONS in Chinese attitudes are not contradictions at all to many Chinese intellectuals and students. Professor Jia Qingguo, associate dean of Beijing University's School of International Studies, asserts that the students who protested for democracy in 1989 and against the United States in 1999 took both actions for the same reason—because they love China. Ten years ago, they believed that democracy was the best way to make China better and stronger. Today, Jia argues, after witnessing Russia's chaotic democratic transition and feeling stung by American pressure on human rights and democracy, many students are less sure that democracy is the best path. However, they remain steadfast in their love for China, and willing to fight for its modernization, prosperity, technology, and strength. This nationalist love sparked rage when the Chinese embassy was bombed.

Other observers suggest that both the students and China have changed over the last decade. Yang Poo, a 1999 graduate of Beijing University in economics, remarks to *TAE* that, "I don't think Americans should always compare our generation to that from ten years ago. I was only in sixth grade at the time!" Today's young Chinese have a less limited and "romanticized" view of the U.S., Yang argues. As China has become increasingly open, young people know far more about the outside world, and "many of us have chosen not to follow the American path," says Peng Junjun, a senior majoring in government at Beijing U. "The protests in May were a manifestation of those sentiments."

Dr. Jin Canrong, a former visiting scholar at Columbia University, notes that discontent over America's China policy has been brewing for the last ten years. Currently a professor at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Jin asserts that many Chinese have found American pressure to change China repulsive. The annual congressional fight to revoke China's normal trading status (formerly known as most-favored-nation status), efforts to bar Beijing from hosting the Olympics of 2000, allegations of illegal Chinese campaign finance contributions and nuclear espionage, and criticisms of China's human rights abuses and lack of religious freedom have built resentment, claims Jin.

Many Americans would distinguish criticism of the Chinese government from friendliness toward the Chinese people, especially since the Chinese do not enjoy the right to elect their government officials. We believe that opposing an undemocratic Chinese government does not mean one is anti-China. Many Chinese, however, do not grasp such distinctions, and are not appreciative of American criticisms. Professor Byron Weng of the City University of Hong Kong connects the sentiments unleashed in the May protests to arguments expressed in the 1994 Chinese bestseller *China Can Say No*. Written by two participants of the 1989 student democratic movement, this book rails against American hegemony, arrogance, and "bullying" tactics attempting to change China. "Don't think the Chinese youth appreciate the sanctions by the United States against China," states Song Qiang in its pages. "You cannot divide the individual from the state. When you hurt the Chinese Government, you hurt the Chinese people."

Not every Chinese is as extreme in this as Mr. Song, but his objection to U.S. efforts to remake China in America's image receives much sympathy from other Chinese. Professor Jia of Beijing University compares the U.S. to a set of parents in Nan-

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AP Photo/Jeff widener

During the Tiananmen Square protest, a portrait of Mao faces off with "The Goddess of Democracy" modeled after America's Statue of Liberty by students from the Central Academy of Fine Arts.

jing who had beaten their son to death when he did not obtain good grades at school. "The United States is trying to be such parents to China," Jia said. He argues that the legitimacy of any government rests not on the criticisms outsiders heap on it, but on the opinions of its citizens. "If Chinese within China are not rebelling against the government, what right does the United States have to break up this family?" Jia asks. "While the Chinese government has many problems, I don't want my government to simply collapse, because I live here and will have to face the instability afterwards."

One of the very first Chinese to be sent abroad for study after China opened up to the world in 1978, Jia is a respected scholar with a Ph.D. in political science from Cornell University. Recognizing that constructive criticism from the U.S. could be beneficial for China's development, he argues that many U.S. critics of China know little or nothing about his country. "If frequent China critics like Gary Bauer and Nancy Pelosi really wished to help the Chinese people as they claim, they should come to China and spend a month or two here to learn about the real situation."

This summer, a 24-year-old Chinese student named Li who currently attends graduate school in the United States debated a very pro-Beijing student on the subject of democracy. Li maintained that democratic rights are universal, and the two agreed on little during their hour-long conversation. They did concur on one thing, however: The U.S. should not use pressure to change China. Rather, it "should always show respect, rely on exchanges and dialogue."

The Chinese are in their "golden age," explains an officer

Ying Ma has written previously about affirmative action, racism, China, and other issues.

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of the U.S. consulate in Chengdu, and are rightly proud of their recent dramatic advances. Yet Americans consistently criticize China, without much appreciation of the difficulty of reform. The protests that resulted in the torching of his consul general's residence, he said, were partly a backlash against this.

Clearly, Chinese anger against the U.S. this May was inflamed by the government's biased media presentation of NATO's bombing and the war in Kosovo. Government organs portrayed the United States as an aggressor attacking an innocent sovereign nation. No mention was made of Slobodan Milosevic's ethnic cleansing of Kosovo. Americans in China during the war were frequently asked things like: "How can you kill those innocent people in Kosovo?" "How can you drive them into refugee camps?"

And from day one, state-controlled newspapers described the bombing of the Chinese embassy as deliberate.

The power of the state media becomes apparent upon encountering Chinese who changed their views about the United States overnight after the bombing. Another girl named Li, who was a senior at Beijing University during the protests, could not even conceive of the possibility that the bombing was a mistake. Previously an admirer of America's championing of democracy, human rights, and equality, Li now denounced the United States as barbaric for having killed three Chinese, and hypocritical for applying its lofty values only to its own citizens.

A man named Ye who had graduated from Chongqing University had similar reactions. He said he deeply respects America's political system, values, and freedoms. "Yet when you bombed our embassy deliberately, this was an insult to the Chinese people. Even though we very much would like to be your friend, we will not tolerate such an affront," he said. In this case and others, the party media obviously achieved their goal of manipulating the embassy bombing to foment Chinese nationalism and a backlash against a persistent critic of their regime.

Nonetheless, there was an element of willing collaboration in this deception among many everyday Chinese. Even among college students who spoke flawless English and surfed American news sites on the World Wide Web, for instance, many subscribed to a popular theory which held that the United States bombed the Chinese embassy furtively "to show off its military might and teach China a lesson." One long-time America watcher who edits a Chinese foreign affairs journal and is usually a calm observer of Sino-American relations was enraged by American "arrogance" and "callousness" conveyed through Clinton's original apology.

How Chinese intellectuals and students view the United States will strongly affect their nation's evolution, and what sorts of measures are taken to improve the rule of law, reform a corrupt bureaucracy, maintain economic growth, and establish a more responsive government. As Liu Chao, a computer science major who graduated from Beijing University this June, observes, "Currently there are many Chinese intently pondering China's future and what choices it should make." Sometimes, their confusion is related to their ambivalence about America, the giant on the global horizon. In other cases, there is simply no interest in the American example. Huang Aidongxi, deputy editor of the *Information Times* in Guangzhou, says, "I'm just not all that interested in America or what it has to say."

Others, like Li from Beijing University, disagree. Though still angry at the bombing, Li acknowledged that she wanted to learn about America's "respect for human dignity, universal love, compassion, rule of law, and freedom." Accepted into a well-known American university for this fall 1999, Li had second thoughts during the summer about attending. Yet she maintains that "it's good for the United States to talk about values that ought to be universal, and rights that every decent person should deserve." Hu Guocheng, director of the magazine *American Studies*, urges that the United States should ask the Chinese government why it cared less for the hundreds of Chinese who lost their lives at Tiananmen Square than for the three who died in Belgrade. "You have to commend the United States for raising China's consciousness about its human rights problems," argues Hu.

On the other hand, one student at the anti-American protests in May was reported in *Asiaweek* as rationalizing that even though many more Chinese died at Tiananmen ten years ago than in Belgrade, back then "it was Chinese killing Chinese. It's within the family." Many Chinese resort to the old communist saw that the United States should solve its own internal problems before lecturing other countries what to do.

Others, like a professor from Zhongshan University in the southern city of Guangzhou, complain on the other side that the United States fails to exert sustained pressure on the Chinese government to reform. He criticizes President Clinton for lacking the resolve to revoke China's most-favored-nation status in 1994 after China's human rights condition failed to improve. He continues to talk boldly with foreign visitors about how the U.S. can serve as a great example to the rest of the world. "Its openness and freedom provide hope to many who do not enjoy these rights. It can push China in a better direction."

CHINA'S AMBIVALENCE TOWARD THE UNITED STATES is perfectly encapsulated by the student protest that took place in Beijing recently. Shortly after the U.S. embassy was trashed by three days of riots, the students gathered to make another demand: that the U.S. re-open its visa office quickly.

Beijing professor Byron Weng suggests there is nothing surprising about such sentiments. On the one hand, students long for the material abundance and freedoms of the United States. But they also resent its global power and influence. "It's like we hate the rich, but we want to be rich ourselves," Weng said, "There's no contradiction. It's just the way we are."

Regardless of what the Chinese think of the United States, the USA is bound to play an important role in their future. Nor will Americans cease attempting to change China for the better. That is part of what John Fairbank called America's "missionary zeal."

So it is hopeful to hear one Chinese college student, who was convinced that the U.S. had deliberately bombed the Chinese embassy because it was determined to contain China's rise, nevertheless say that "China should still try to maintain good relations with the United States." Surely the United States should "at least try" to do likewise, acting not as an overweening "rich neighbor" that the Chinese would love to hate, but as the beacon of light that many admirers of liberty in China already look to.

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A Fascinating View From Both Sides of the China-U.S. Divide

Nien Cheng is author of the gripping bestseller Life and Death in Shanghai*—a true account of Cheng's struggle to survive her imprisonment during China's Cultural Revolution, placed against a picture of the forces that have wrenched Chinese society during its communist era. Having lived in the United States since 1983, Cheng has become a sage observer of both her native and adopted homelands. In a wide-ranging recent interview with* The American Enterprise *she touched on some of the factors that separate and unite China and America. She sat with* TAE*'s Elizabeth Spalding in her apartment in Washington, D.C.*

TAE: Why were young Chinese shouting anti-American slogans and attacking our embassy earlier this year?
CHENG: Young people would do that. And then the next morning they may be lined up outside the American consulate trying to get a visa. You know, that happens everywhere. They will join in and have some fun.

Though in many cases these are not the same young people throwing the rocks and standing in the visa line. There are many kinds of young people in China.

And don't forget that the government put many of them on the bus and told them nasty things about Americans, urging them to take action. The hard-liners who took over after Tiananmen Square are still prominent in the Chinese government, though they're dying off.
TAE: What will happen in China when the younger generation takes over?
CHENG: This is hard to tell. Until they come to a top level position, Chinese officials don't speak out. But one thing that's happening is that all new top-level Chinese government officials are now university graduates.
TAE: Some of them educated outside of China....
CHENG: Oh, yes. The children of all the top-level leaders—even hard-liners like Li Peng, who was behind the Tiananmen crackdown—they all have degrees from top universities in the United States.

The children of all China's top-level leaders—even hard-liners—have degrees from top universities in the U. S.

I spoke at Cornell University soon after my book came out, and the woman who presided was the dean of the graduate school. Afterward, we had a little conversation, and she told me a lot of Chinese government scholars were at Cornell. This was back in 1987 or '88, and I said to her, you know, if you investigate their family background, you will find that most of these men and women are high officials' children.

I know some brilliant young Chinese who have sat for the exams that select candidates to study abroad, only to get edged out because senior officials' children had to be accommodated.

So I warned her. I said the fathers or mothers of many of these students are top-level communists. "Oh, that doesn't matter," she said, "that doesn't matter." Congressman Cox's report on the Los Alamos thefts said the Chinese espionage units use students. But they don't use all students; some of the students they don't trust. They trust only their own people.

America should make assessments. Where there are Chinese students, find out each one's family background. They do research, they can go to those labs. The door is wide open, and nobody asks. Their father may be a big general. You can't seal a researcher's mouth, of course. But maybe some of them shouldn't be offered positions. I think America is too casual.

I think we should look into all foreign students; otherwise, you get suspicious of all students unnecessarily. Because it's only a small group who are a risk. If you can identify them you can relax about the other students. Wouldn't that be better?
TAE: Why do you think America is so casual about that?
CHENG: Because that is this country's tradition. And it's definitely taken advantage of by others, like the Chinese.Everything here is open. Except what's shielded behind what you call privacy. You know, the Chinese don't even have the word "privacy" in their vocabulary.
TAE: Seriously?
CHENG: No. No. You don't walk into people's bedrooms, and

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all that, but privacy about spying? Government should know.

Americans are so generous. They even give scholarships to foreign students. Taxpayers support foreigners who go back home to serve their own people, not the American people. Americans have warm hearts.

You have somewhere a flood or whatever, money pours in. I do it now, I do it all the time myself. But this is something that struck me when I first settled down here. I lived in England, I lived in Canada. They're not like this.

Chinese are very generous to their own family, but they are very reluctant to give help to people they don't know.

TAE: How dangerous is China's theft of nuclear secrets?

CHENG: Thank God, nobody is going to use the atomic bomb. That's our best safeguard. I mean, no matter how many secrets the Chinese stole to make advanced nuclear weapons, nobody is going to use it.

TAE: So why did the Chinese want it?

CHENG: It's prestige. And the idea that "You wouldn't dare use it on me because I have it too." It's that kind of psychology.

I don't think Americans fully understand communism. They're surprised that the communists are using their students, their businessmen, their scientists to get bits of information that they then try to put together. We waste time trying to figure out what is private sector, what is the government in China. It makes no difference. Anybody who has lived in China knows that no private person or company would dare to refuse the government, because your life is in the hands of the government. The government could take away your business tomorrow. Americans underestimate the communists.

The Chinese are not discarding communism faster because they are genuinely afraid of a big upheaval like in Russia.

TAE: Do you think the Chinese are motivated now by both communism and also Chinese nationalism?

CHENG: China's leaders never had be real communists. I think I've read more books on communism than most Chinese government officials. You know, Marx's writing and Engel's, it's terribly dull. It's not interesting. It's theoretical. It can't be applied. The Russians really had the ideal to spread communism. For the Chinese it has just been a tool.

Communism in China came about because of war. Same for Eastern Europe. If there weren't war, Czechoslovakia and Poland would never have become communist. Certainly not China. War is bad. I think there is a general understanding of that now.

Today, the Chinese only want people to respect them. They want Americans to treat them like equals.

You know, they were colonialized so much by Western powers, until the end of the second world war, and it traumatized them.

Then China's experience with the Japanese in World War II was very bitter. We were bombed. We had nowhere to go. There were many, many casualties. I walked around after some of the firebombings. In the poor people's homes, all made of wood, there were many corpses, burned, still smoldering.

China's ambition is to be No. 1 in Asia. If not No. 1, at least as important as Japan. Japan is our historical enemy. The Chinese cannot abide the idea that Japan is No. 1 in Asia.

TAE: Do you think the Chinese will ever truly get along with the Japanese?

CHENG: Oh, no.

I don't think the Chinese want a war. They understand. But this is part of the problem with Taiwan. The current president of Taiwan is very pro-Japan. That's an important reason why the mainland Chinese don't like him. The native Taiwanese, of which he is one, are also Chinese, but they went to Taiwan in the 10th and 11th century, so they were separate.

President Lee graduated from Kyoto University before he went to Cornell for a Ph.D. His English is very poor, and his Mandarin is very poor. But he speaks fluent Japanese. You see, he grew up under the Japanese occupation of Taiwan. And while the Japanese colonial officials in Korea were very cruel, causing Koreans to hate the Japanese, the Japanese governors in Taiwan were all very good. So the Taiwanese tend to prefer the Japanese to the mainlanders.

And the native Taiwanese outnumber the transplanted mainlanders. Chiang Kai-shek only took one million people to Taiwan. Taiwan has 23 million population, so the Taiwanese are the majority. This is one reason the communists are afraid they might want independence.

Even now, 50 years later, Taiwanese still refer to the 1949 refugees as "mainlanders." And originally the Kuomintang did not trust the Taiwanese, so they excluded them from government service. As a result, the Taiwanese all went into business. So the economy of the island is now in the hands of the native Taiwanese. And they have the power. The real power.

TAE: If communism was a kind of accidental transplant to China, why are they one of the last nations in the world still clinging to it? Wouldn't clearly dumping communism vastly improve their relations with the U.S. and others?

CHENG: One reason the Chinese are not discarding communism faster is because they are genuinely afraid of experiencing a big upheaval like in Russia. China is doing better than Russia. Much, much better. People are living better.

And now they've changed the Constitution to give the private sector more opportunities. Many people are starting businesses.

So communism is dead in China, but not in a dramatic death. If you think in terms of opera, Russian communism died very theatrically, after singing and then collapsing. Chinese communism just died gradually, like an old person. Faded away. Nobody talks about communism any more in China, though they still call themselves the Communist Party.

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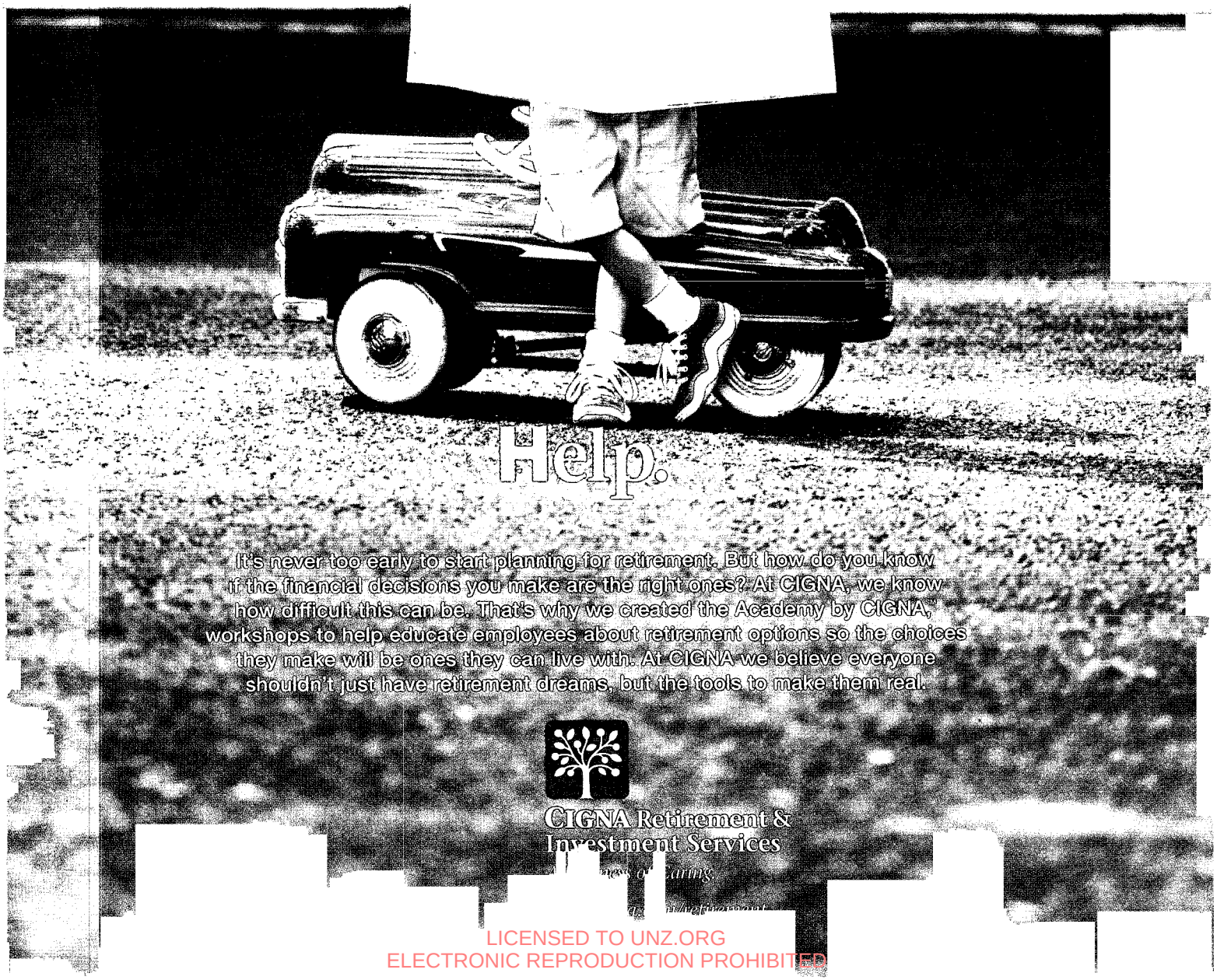

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What Would They Think of the 90s?

By the miracle of poetic license and a bit of time travelling, we learn how 24 historic figures might view the decade just ending

Illustration by Ralph Butler

MARK TWAIN

By Allan Carlson

If the great American humorist and cynic Mark Twain could view the world of the 1990s, he would cast a knowing smile on its political life, both domestic and foreign.

The remarkable events surrounding the Clinton White House went about as he would have expected. Twain had a low view of politicians in general (he called the U.S. Congress our country's only permanent criminal class), but as a Missourian he held everything coming out of Arkansas in special contempt. In *Roughing It*, for example, Twain describes a character called Mr. Arkansas, "a stalwart ruffian who was always drunk and always suffering for a fight," a bully who terrorized the boarding house until humiliated by the landlord's wife. Readers of Twain will also recall the passage of Huck Finn and Jim through Arkansas, in the rough company of the Duke and the Dauphin. When these two frauds tried a little Shakespeare on a sleepy Arkansas town, only to draw a pitiful crowd, Huck reported: "So the Duke said these Arkansaw lunkheads couldn't come up to Shakespeare, what they wanted was low comedy—and maybe something rather worse than low comedy." Handbills for the next show declared in bold letters: Ladies and Children not Admitted. "There," said the Duke. "If that line don't fetch them, I don't know Arkansas."

Pondering the Gennifer Flowers incident, the Whitewater scam, the cattle-futures miracle, the Lewinsky affair, and Clinton's artful dodge of impeachment, Twain would conclude that neither "Arkansaw lunkheads" nor Washington politicians had changed much, and that something below low comedy still suited them.

The same for foreign affairs. In November 1900, the *New York Herald* invited Twain to write "A Greeting from the Nineteenth Century to the Twentieth Century," and he produced these 50 words:

> I bring you the stately matron called Christendom, returning bedraggled, besmirched and dishonored from pirate raids in Kiao-Chou, Manchuria, South Africa and the Philippines, with her soul full of meanness, her pocket full

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of boodle, and her mouth full of pious hypocrisies. Give her the soap and a towel, but hide the looking glass.

A fierce anti-imperialist, Twain was appalled by episodes such as Britain's war against the Boer farmers, European incursions into China, and the American campaign against the Philippine rebels. One suspects he would have little good to say about modern "pirate raids" in Mogadishu, Pristina, or Port-au-Prince. The diminished role of Christianity in all this might puzzle him, though. Where politicians of 1900 usually clothed their foreign forays in the mantle of "extending Christian civilization," the international leaders of the 1990s instead have summoned the more vague—and so more malleable—religion of "humanity." Even a committed agnostic like Twain would probably judge this a troubling change.

Twain would be truly shocked, though, by the moral and cultural landscape of the Twentieth Century's last decade. Despite his surface flouting of social convention, Twain was actually a strict Victorian moralist. His marriage to Olivia Langdon was far from idyllic, yet he never wavered in his vow of fidelity. In early 1906, he lent his support to a fund-raising tour by the Russian revolutionary Maxim Gorky, only to renounce his sponsorship when the novelist-playwright arrived in America accompanied by his mistress, rather than his wife. Even as Twain's daughters reached near age 30, he insisted that chaperones accompany them on their forays outside the home. Such a man would be unable to make sense of the gay and lesbian movement, the film *South Park*, pregnant teenagers on the federal dole, or a million divorces a year. Even in his last years, as Twain descended into deep depression and his writing took on a dark cast, he never imagined such a broad falling-away from the standards of middle-class propriety.

Allan Carlson is president of the Howard Center for Family, Religion, and Society in Rockford, Illinois.

W. C. FIELDS

By Andrew Ferguson

What would W. C. Fields do if he were alive today? It is a sobering question, and he disliked anything sobering. ("I never drink water. That's the stuff that rusts pipes.") But you can imagine him materializing suddenly in the middle of one of Mrs. Clinton's photo-ops, taking a quick look around, rearing back in horror, and demanding to be returned at once to the hell of Philadelphia—Philadelphia being the only worldly thing he despised as much as children. And dogs. And wives. And teetotalers. And health enthusiasts. And in-laws. And mechanical devices of any kind. And vocal music. And....

The list of his hatreds was long, but children were always of special concern. So great was his contempt for the underage community it's startling to realize he was once a child himself—and a child in Philadelphia, no less. He was born there in 1880, or perhaps 1879, to a feckless father and a stern and moralizing mother. But he escaped all three—family, childhood, and the city of brotherly love—as soon as he was able, at the age of 11 by some accounts, at 15 by others. Whatever the precise circumstances, by the time he reached adulthood he had already been on the road for years, traveling the vaudeville circuit as a clown and juggler from one dusty town to another, and perfecting the misanthropy that survives even today as a rebuke to prissiness and pomposity of all sorts.

He would not be happy here, in the land of Bill and Hillary, the land of sensitivity training and Wal-Mart greeters and compassionate conservatism. Since his death in 1946—from cirrhosis, an enlarged heart, and general decrepitude—the evolution of American culture has speciated at precisely those points that most horrified W. C. Fields.

Fields accommodated himself to Prohibition, for example, by ignoring it and surrounding himself with friends who shared his fondness for the drinking life. Today things would be much worse for him. Liquor is legal but nobody drinks it. Even those cohorts traditionally the most bibulous—reporters and artists and actors—now pride themselves on their daily huffing sessions on the Thighmaster. He liked to eat and would be appalled you can't open so much as a package of peanuts these days without getting past a federally mandated label reminding you of your cholesterol count. In Fields's America a few busybodies railed against tobacco—another of his great consolations—but even they would be surprised to see it *de facto* criminalized.

Disentangling Fields's public persona from his private character is difficult. Somewhere along the line the two melded. He seemed genuinely to have disliked children, with the occasional exception of his own. The story is told of how, when the preternaturally precious, cute-as-a-button child star Deanna Durbin moved in next door, he was so unnerved by the sound of her singing lessons he sold his house and bought another one miles away. "How do you like your children?" a reporter once asked. "Parboiled," he said. He tipped gin into the bottle of his obstreperous co-star Baby Leroy, who promptly fell asleep, which was the idea.

The greatest portrait of Fields shows him with a golf club in one hand and Baby Leroy dangling dangerously from the other. The look of perplexed horror on Fields's face is worth a thousand words, all of them obscene. Contrast this with an "iconic" image from our day—say, Elizabeth Dole reading to schoolchildren chosen for their flawless sexual and ethnic balance—and you can imagine which America Fields would prefer.

How did Fields' America—so censorious, so moralistic!—endure such a man, and not only endure him but celebrate him,

Author **Mark Twain** (1835–1910)

Comedian **W.C. Fields** (1879–1946)

Corbis/Bettman

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make him famous and rich? A healthy country, which is to say one with a firm grounding in some moral consensus, requires misanthropes as a heating system requires exhaust vents. That earlier consensus didn't presume virtue on everyone's part, or for that matter on anyone's part. It didn't assume that children, with their troubling hygiene and pathetic motor skills, were universally adorable, or that round-the-clock sobriety was man's natural state, or that a fellow's shadier impulses could be erased through the raising of his consciousness.

"How do you like your children?" a reporter once asked W. C. Fields. "Parboiled," he replied.

Shadiness, in fact, was held to be ever-present and unignorable; best then to acknowledge it, through caricature and clowning. This was—to strike a moralistic note of my own—a richer understanding of what makes us tick. In sexual matters, 1930s America was much stricter than today, but when Fields said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery—unless in the mood," his audience laughed. They knew he was on to something about the way the mind works, even as they knew, too, that adultery was more than a trifle.

Every era is censorious and moralistic in its own way, and every era gets the misanthropes it deserves. Since our only moral consensus rests on a belief in the *dangers* of moral consensus, outrage is reserved exclusively for those who refuse to conform to the wan, attentuated relativism of the great middle class.

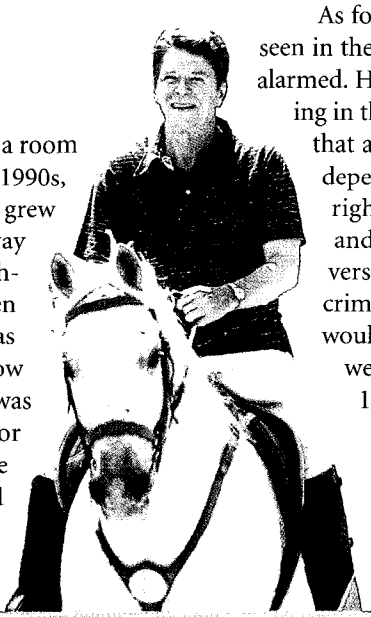
Fields, I bet, would be repulsed by what passes for a misanthrope today: nightclub comedians like Dennis Miller and Bill Maher, sippers of bottled water who are merely smug and self-satisfied, and, lacking wit and penetration, only accidentally funny. I prefer the man who could say, lying in his death bed: "You know, I was thinking about the news boys out there, suffering in the cold. I think I'll try to do something for them." The friends gathering round Fields nodded in solemn assent. "On the other hand," he continued, "f--- 'em."

Andrew Ferguson is senior editor of The Weekly Standard.

RONALD REAGAN

By Michael Barone

Ronald Reagan, who was always ready to search a room full of manure to find a pony, would love the 1990s, were his vision still unclouded. This is a man who grew up in a modest-income home, worked his way through college, and graduated in 1933—the highest unemployment year in American history—then within five years found well-paying jobs he loved as a sports announcer and movie star. At 50 his show business career was sputtering to a halt; at 55 he was elected Governor of California. Defeated twice for the presidency, he came back and was elected at age 69. He survived assassination and ridicule to lead America to a prosperity his opponents said could never again be achieved, and to a victory in the Cold War which even most of his fellow conservatives thought impossible. The man was an optimist.



President **Ronald Reagan** (1911–

In the 1990s he would find many things to be optimistic about. The low-inflation prosperity he produced in the 1980s was interrupted briefly in 1990-91 but returned in 1992 (its original sources unnoticed by most political reporters, but undoubtedly a satisfaction to Reagan even as Alzheimer's was closing in). The boom has continued ever since. America triumphed militarily in the Gulf War using Reagan-cultivated weaponry and troops, and despite falling defense spending since his departure, the United States has maintained military superiority around the world ever since. It is unlikely Reagan read Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History*, but he appreciated well before the book appeared its main thesis: There is no serious intellectual competition to the American ideals of political democracy and market capitalism, tempered by welfare state protections. The man who told the British Parliament back in 1982 that Communism was on the ash heap of history would not be surprised by its complete demise in the 1990s.

Would Reagan be disheartened by the electoral triumphs of Bill Clinton in the United States, or of center-left politicians abroad? Not much, I think. Clinton, Blair, and company have paid Reagan and his friend Margaret Thatcher the compliment that Dwight Eisenhower and Harold Macmillan paid FDR and the postwar Labour Party: They have not dared to undo their major works. The Republican Congress elected in 1994 and (to the consternation of the Washington elite) re-elected in 1996 and 1998 has more Reaganites in its ranks (though not a clear majority) than any Congress Reagan faced while in office, just as the Democratic Congresses elected in 1958 and after contained more New Dealers than any Congress Franklin Roosevelt faced when he was alive. For a century we have been told by historians and intellectuals of all kinds that history moves left. Not necessarily, Reagan said. For the last 20 years history has been moving right, and there is no sign that that movement has stopped.

As for the cultural decline and decay so many have seen in the 1990s, I do not think Reagan would be much alarmed. He would focus instead on things that are moving in the right direction. He was governor, after all, in that awful 1965-75 decade when crime and welfare dependency both tripled, but he never agreed with right-wingers who lamented the state of society and left-wingers who smugly reveled in their adversarial stance to a society whose high levels of crime and welfare they claimed were permanent. He would not be surprised that in the 1990s crime and welfare were declining as steeply as they rose in 1965-75.

Reagan would take quiet satisfaction as well in the less steep declines in divorce, illegitimacy, abortion, and drug use that began around 1980 and have continued through the 1990s. About the character of popular culture

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in the 1990s Reagan would probably be a bit *dissatisfied*, for surely he preferred the universal popular culture of 1930s and '40s movies. But he would point out that over the long run no one will seriously doubt which culture was superior and will last.

For Reagan instinctively understood that the words *democracy* and *vulgar* come from Greek and Latin words meaning roughly the same thing: *the people*. He grew up in an America which he believed in many ways was imperfect. He decried the economic stagnation of the early 1930s, opposed the racial segregation that was institutionalized in the South and practiced elsewhere, the religious discrimination against Jews and others that was almost universal. But, like Franklin Roosevelt, he believed that in the end the American people would get these things right, as they mostly have. Other Presidents—Kennedy and Johnson, Nixon and Carter, Bush and Clinton—have distrusted the people, relied on elites to make policy, tried to bypass what they considered ignorant and benighted public opinion. Reagan trusted the people and was not fazed by—perhaps was secretly amused by—the condescension of the elites. I believe he would gloss over the aspects of the 1990s he found displeasing, and would take heart that most things seem to be going America's way. As he expected all along.

Other Presidents relied on elites to make policy. Reagan trusted the people.

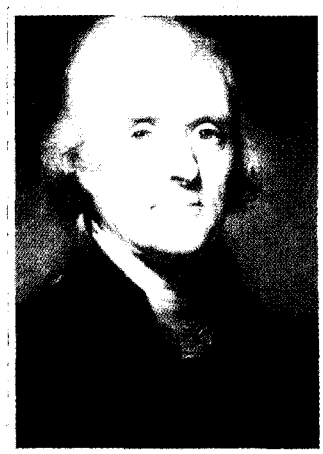
Michael Barone, a columnist for U.S. News & World Report, *is a frequent contributor to* TAE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

By Bill Kauffman

Thomas Jefferson—author of the Declaration of Independence, third President of the United States, but best-known today as a slave-owning white man and progenitor of the Sally Hemings line—was recently interviewed for TAE *by* NewsSqueak *columnist Jonathan Squib. [Editor's note: All Jefferson responses are actual quotations from his writings.]*

SQUIB: What an honor this is for me, Mr. President, to speak with a man of the Enlightenment. Nick Nolte didn't do you justice in that movie. Well, to our subject: the 1990s. It's ending in a blaze of gunfire. Hillary Clinton has wisely told America's children to reject guns. What would you tell a teenager tempted by firearms?
JEFFERSON: The gun gives boldness, enterprise, and independence to the mind. Let your gun, therefore, be the constant companion of your walks.
SQUIB: That would be a violation of the Gun-free School Zones Act. Besides, today we empower children with computers and PBS, not guns. Indeed, if you don't mind my saying so, I think we are a more moral people today: You would be so proud of how America stood tall in Serbia.
JEFFERSON: Our first and fundamental maxim should be never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe.
SQUIB: That's—isolationism! Times change. And nowhere is that more evident than in the bi-gendering of the U.S. political leadership: Madeleine Albright, Hillary Clinton, Janet Reno—if you'll forgive a slogan from Big Tobacco, for which we have you Virginia planters to blame, women in the '90s have come a long way, baby.
JEFFERSON: A little patience, and we shall see the reign of witches pass over, their spells dissolved, and the people recovering their true sight, restoring their government to its true principles.
SQUIB: That's a nasty sexist crack, quite beneath you. I guess the Serbs and the Branch Davidians found out women can carry the big stick too! Be that as it may, the First Lady and her husband *have* stumbled on occasion while navigating the moral minefield of married life. Through their example we baby boomers have learned that compromise is what life is all about.
JEFFERSON: Give up money, give up fame, give up science, give up the earth itself and all it contains, rather than do an immoral act.
SQUIB: Like bop a pretty slave girl? I saw *Jefferson in Paris*. Hey, I can't blame you. So tell us: did you have sexual relations with Sally Hemings?
JEFFERSON: Defamation is becoming a necessary of life. Even those who do not believe these abominations still read them, and instead of the abhorrence and indignation which should fill a virtuous mind, betray a secret pleasure in the possibility that some may believe them, though they do not themselves.
SQUIB: Our own President was defamed throughout the decade. His rabidly partisan foes even impeached him for lying about sex. But what could he do, trapped in the Starr chamber?
JEFFERSON: Nothing is so mistaken as the supposition that a person is to extricate himself from a difficulty by intrigue, by chicanery, by dissimulations, by trimming, by an untruth, by an injustice. This increases the difficulties tenfold, and those who pursue these methods get themselves so involved that they can turn no way but their infamy becomes more exposed. Never tell an untruth. He who permits himself to tell a lie once finds it much easier to do it a second and third time, till at length it becomes habitual. He tells lies without attending to it, and truths without the world's believing him.



Corbis/Bettman

President **Thomas Jefferson** (1743-1826)

SQUIB: That sounds absolutist. Aren't you alarmed by the ominous presence of fundamentalist Christians in our body politic?
JEFFERSON: I confidently expect that the present generation will see Unitarianism become the general religion of the United States.
SQUIB: You know, I think you're right! But to a more serious matter: As the decade

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ended, a nation wept when our favorite son, John F. Kennedy Jr., on whose handsome face was chiseled our past and our future, flew to his watery grave. Did you read our 12-part series on John-John's legacy?

JEFFERSON: I do not take a single newspaper, nor read one a month; and I feel myself infinitely the happier for it. The man who never looks into a newspaper is better informed than he who reads them, inasmuch as he who knows nothing is nearer to truth than he whose mind is filled with falsehoods and errors.

SQUIB: I thought you were famous for saying that you'd prefer newspapers with no government to government with no newspapers? Today that's a false choice: The media *are* the government. From Somalia to gun control, we set the country's agenda for the decade. Think of it as public service.

JEFFERSON: The greatest service which can be rendered to any country is to add a useful plant to its culture.

SQUIB: Uh, yeah. Moving on, whatever their flaws, Clinton and Bush, our '90s Presidents, sought to re-energize the federal government, to make it an active partner in our lives, enabling us to dream great dreams.

JEFFERSON: I am not a friend to a very energetic government. It is always oppressive. A wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, which shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government.

SQUIB: But is it compassionate? The more enlightened conservatives of the '90s have learned that regarding government as an enemy is a slippery slope that leads to the wacko militia movement. I think we can both agree that the most alarming development of the decade has been the growth of these domestic terrorists, who have abused both the First Amendment and the outmoded Second Amendment they so adore. How can we crack down on irresponsible dissent while maintaining respect for human rights?

JEFFERSON: A little rebellion, now and then, is a good thing. The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure....

At this point our interview was terminated while Mr. Jefferson was led away by agents of the Hate Thought Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He was sentenced to six months of community service with AmeriCorps, where he might better learn what it means to be an American in the 1990s.

Associate editor Bill Kauffman is the author of four books, including America First! Its History, Culture, and Politics.

An untruth increases the difficulties tenfold. Never tell an untruth.

—Thomas Jefferson

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

By David Horowitz

On a recent trip to the South I found myself in Memphis, the city where an assassin's bullet struck down Martin Luther King Jr. just over 30 years ago. There I discovered a National Civil Rights Museum, housed in what once was the Lorraine Motel, where King was murdered.

Everything is preserved exactly as it was; in the room where King slept the night before, the covers are pulled back, the bed unmade, the breakfast tray laid out. The cavernous first floor has become a silent stage for the dramas of the movement King once led. These narratives in documents and photographs are as inspirational today as then. In the center of the hall, the burned shell of a school bus recalls the freedom rides and the perils their passengers once endured. Scattered about are small TVs whose tapes recapture the moments that moved a nation. On one screen a crowd of well-dressed young men and women perpetually braves police dogs and water hoses, vainly attempting to turn them back—a powerful tribute to a movement and leader able to win battles against overwhelming odds by exerting moral force over an entire nation.

At the end of the hall, however, is a jarring sight. Staring out from a wall-size monument are the faces of Malcolm X and Elijah Muhammad, leaders of the Nation of Islam.

For one old enough to have supported King, this is incomprehensible. Malcolm X was King's great *antagonist* in the black community, leading its resistance to the civil rights hope. The Black Muslim publicly scorned King's March on Washington as "ridiculous" and predicted the failure of the civil rights movement King led because the white man would never willingly give black Americans such rights. He rejected King's call to non-violence and an integrated society, and in so doing earned the disapproval of the American majority King had wooed and was about to win.

King was unyielding before these attacks and refused to share any platform with him. Only in the last year of Malcolm's life, when the civil rights cause was all but won, and Malcolm had left the Nation of Islam and rejected its racism, did King finally relent and agree to appear in the now-famous photograph of the two.

Leaving the museum, I realized this image reflected a truth about the movement King created, whose legacy has in large part been squandered. The moral decline of the civil rights leadership is reflected in some of the most prominent public episodes of the 1990s: the antics of racist demagogues like Louis Farrakhan and Al Sharpton; the indefensible causes like Tawana Brawley; the rallying to O.J. Simpson; rationalizations of the murderous Los Angeles riots; the various divisive marches organized by the Nation of Islam.

Corbis/Flip Schulke

Reverend **Martin Luther King Jr** (1929–1968)

The impact of such episodes has been compounded by the silence of black civil rights leaders over racial outrages committed by African Americans—the

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anti-Korean incitements of black activists in New York, Washington, and other cities; the black mob attacks on white and Asian store-owners during the L.A. riots; the lynching of a Hasidic Jew by a black mob in Crown Heights, and a black jury's acquittal of his murderer. The failures of civil rights leaders like Jesse Jackson, Kwesi Mfume, Maxine Waters, David Dinkins, and Julian Bond to condemn black racism committed against other ethnic communities during the 1990s stand in striking contrast to the demands such leaders make on the consciences of whites, and to the moral example set by King.

Meanwhile, the advance guard of the civil rights movement residing on college campuses has taken an even more poisonous turn over the last decade. Afrocentrist racists like Leonard Jeffries, the late John Henrik Clarke, Derrick Bell, and Tony Martin—to name just a few—have become integral parts of the academic culture in the 1990s, often running entire academic departments.

Afrocentric racists have become integral parts of the academic culture. According to the *Race Traitor* intellectuals, "whiteness" is mankind's principal scourge.

The magazine *Race Traitor* is the theoretical organ of this academic cult. According to the *Race Traitor* intellectuals, "whiteness" is the principal scourge of mankind. Unlike anti-black attitudes, which are universally decried—and which would trigger the expulsion of their purveyors from any academic institution in America—this racism is not only permitted, but encouraged by today's liberal academics. An anthology of the first five years of *Race Traitor* was the winner of the 1997 American Book Award. Its jacket features praise by trendy Harvard professor Cornel West, whose own coziness with the racist Louis Farrakhan has done nothing to tarnish his academic reputation or his standing in the civil rights community.

Anti-white racism became a common currency of left-wing intellectuals during the 1990s. Examples range from Communist professor Angela Davis, who recently told an audience of undergraduates at Michigan State that the world's number-one problem is white people, to Nobel laureate Toni Morrison, who in her introduction to an anthology about the O. J. Simpson case, *Birth of A Nation 'Hood*, implied that white America acted as the KKK in pursuing Simpson for the murder of his ex-wife and Ron Goldman.

Paradoxically, then, the terms of the civil rights debate have been reversed. King's crusade for racial harmony and color-blindness is in 1999 scorned by his own heirs. King's support of universal standards and social integration has been cast aside. The civil rights spokesmen of the '90s instead demand double standards for government-designated groups and ferociously attack any effort to establish the principles King stood for.

California's recent Civil Rights Initiative, for instance—which actually incorporated the words of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to outlaw racial preferences—was violently denounced by civil rights leaders. They employed a scorched-earth strategy whose purpose was to strip proponents of color-blindness of any shred of respectability. The chief spokesman for the Initiative, Ward Connerly, was accused of hating blacks (though he is black himself), and of being a bed-fellow of the Ku Klux Klan. Activists even invited former Klan member David Duke to California to forge the non-existent connection, paying his expenses.

But in the years since the Initiative's passage, not a single one of their dire predictions has come true. Even the enrollment of blacks in California's college system has not significantly dropped: The *Chronicle of Higher Education* reports California's campuses enrolled only 27 fewer black students in 1999 than in 1997. Yet there has been no apology from the civil rights demagogues responsible for the anti-Civil Rights Initiative campaign and the fear-mongering that accompanied it.

How sad that King's noble sacrifices for a more just America have come to this.

David Horowitz's book on this subject, Hating Whitey, *has just been published by Spence Publishing.*

THOMAS EDISON

By W. Michael Cox and Richard Alm

Thomas Edison just about invented the idea of invention. With 1,093 registered patents, the Wizard of Menlo Park is the most prolific single inventor in U.S. history. Any schoolboy can tick off Edison's breakthroughs—the first practical incandescent light bulb, the phonograph, motion pictures, the first system for generating electricity. None of it was happenstance, as Edison's most famous quotation testifies: "Genius is one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration."

If somehow transported to the 1990s, Edison's curious, eccentric mind would no doubt find today's gadgets and gizmos fascinating. The personal computers, cell phones, satellite dishes, camcorders, pagers, CD players, video games, high-definition televisions, and electronic date books found in everyday homes would keep Edison, a workaholic known for his 20-hour days, looking for a long time. Then there is the mind-boggling array of technologies found in commercial settings: robots, artificial intelligence, lasers, biotechnology, micromachines, fiber optics, and much more.

After making this inventory of '90s technology, Edison would realize that the innovating spirit that blossomed in the America of his day is still alive and well. And he would be excited. Great leaps in technology are important in their own right, but just as important are the secondary waves of invention they spawn, speeding the pace of economic progress. Edison knew technology is cumulative, that each advance builds on

Archive/American Stock

Inventor **Thomas Edison** (1847–1931)

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those that come before. "I start where the last man left off," he said, and America in the 1990s is a long way up the ladder.

The dynamism of America's current markets wouldn't surprise Edison. He was no ivory-tower researcher disconnected from the competition and incentives of the marketplace. Quite the contrary, his projects aimed to make money. "I find out what the world needs," he said. "Then I go ahead and try to invent it." "Anything that won't sell, I don't want to invent."

Edison was no ivory-tower researcher. "Anything that won't sell, I don't want to invent."

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Edison founded dozens of companies to market his inventions. The most famous were his electric light companies, which grew into General Electric. Edison would take great pride in the fact that GE is still one of America's greatest companies, currently number two in market value behind Microsoft. Indeed, GE stock rose from under $17 a share at the start of the 1990s to $112 at the end, an average annual gain of 22 percent.

Edison might have pined to share in that. In his day, Edison wasn't a business success, often selling rights to his inventions to raise capital. The aspiring entrepreneur of the nineteenth century would envy the entrepreneurs of today, who can raise billions of dollars from the public to get their businesses moving. In a modern capital market, Edison might have been remembered not just as a great inventor but also as a business giant.

Edison knew the biggest payoff of improved technology was not to wealthy businessmen but rather to consumers. He promised to make light bulbs and electric power "so cheap that only the rich will be able to burn candles," and today Americans take cheap light for granted. Measured in a factory worker's time, the price of 100 kilowatts of power has fallen today to less than one percent of what it was in 1900. In just the past 25 years, laboring-time prices have fallen 40 percent for refrigerators, 39 percent for air travel, 85 percent for a color TV, 90 percent for a long distance phone call, 98 percent for a cellular phone, and 25 percent to see a movie.

What once were luxuries, available only to society's upper crust, have become routinely available to even lower-income people. Among poor households in the 1990s, 98 percent have refrigerators, 97 percent have color TVs, 72 percent have one or more cars and 74 percent have VCRs. The relentless drive of the free enterprise system to spread goods and services to the masses quickly raises living standards. Edison would quickly notice that the middle-class household of the 1990s literally has it better than nineteenth-century plutocrats.

Edison, like most inventors, appreciated the importance of the rich in enabling scientific and economic progress. In his day as now, the rich played an important but rarely recognized role: They bought new technologies and products early on, paying the high prices companies charge early in a product cycle, when fixed costs of production are high relative to revenues. In this way they made it possible for prices to later tumble, establishing the great democracy of consumption that marks America in the 1990s.

Thomas Edison likened himself to a sponge: "I absorb ideas from every source." His inventions, though, mostly came early in his career. Then as now, it is the young who embrace new technologies and forge new companies and industries. America in the 1990s boasts an incredible number of young millionaires. Edison would realize that's no accident.

Later in life, Edison grew stodgy, losing the open-mindedness that made him a successful inventor, becoming instead an advocate of the technologies he pioneered as a young man. New ideas lost their fascination. For example, Edison stuck stubbornly with direct current (DC) as the electric industry moved to alternating current (AC). He ignored the discovery of radio waves.

From the vantage point of the 1990s, Edison would see that radio and AC current had an enormous impact. He might conclude that Americans should emulate his early years not his later ones. They should remain open to the new technologies that are the wellspring of human progress.

W. Michael Cox is chief economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. Richard Alm is a business writer at the Dallas Morning News. *They are the authors of* Myths of Rich and Poor.

SAINT PAUL

By Michael Novak

Though his story is read quite differently by Jews and Christians, the outline is not disputed: A certain Saul was born in Tarsus (in modern Turkey) between A.D. 5 and 10, son of a well-to-do Jewish family in a thriving Jewish community. He studied in Jerusalem with the highest rabbis, probably including the most learned rabbi of the era, Gamaliel. While in Jerusalem, not long after the death of Jesus, Saul became active in the persecution of what devout Jews took to be an illicit, vagabond sect of mendicants—the early Christians—who were disrupting synagogue services with their blasphemous outbursts. He took part in the stoning to death of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, whose story is vividly told in chapter seven of the Acts of the Apostles.

Not long afterwards, traveling along the road to Damascus, Jesus appeared to Saul and spoke words he never forgot. From then on, Saul, now Paul, became the most ardent of Jewish converts to Christianity, and more than any other stressed Jesus' great commission—

Superstock/Velazquez, Diego

Evangelist **Paul** (circa 5–67)

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"Go, preach the gospel to all nations"—by evangelizing the non-Jews, or "Gentiles." Paul argues that in becoming Christians, Gentiles need not follow Jewish rituals like circumcision. On foot and by small skiff he crisscrosses the Empire, suffers from poverty, the hardships of travel, savage persecution, and finally beheading by the Romans.

Here is Paul's own description of what he endured:

> I have been sent to prison more often, and whipped so many times more, often almost to death. Five times I had the 39 lashes from the Jews; three times I have been beaten with sticks; once I was stoned; three times I have been shipwrecked, and once adrift in the open sea a night and a day. Constantly traveling, I have been in danger from rivers and in danger from brigands, in danger from my own people and in danger from pagans; in danger in the towns, in danger in the open country, danger at sea and danger from the so-called brothers. I have worked and labored, often without sleep; I have been hungry and thirsty and often starving; I have been in the cold without clothes. [II Corinthians 11:21-27]

What would this brave and long-suffering man think of our very different but still dangerous world today? How would he react if he were to arrive in, say, Los Angeles of 1999? Notwithstanding its beautiful biblical name, if he watched television or strolled down cinema row looking at the posters, he might recall the morals of the decaying Roman Empire.

But Saint Paul was not one of those preachers who put the emphasis on sin, although he called things by their proper names and frequently upbraided the recipients of his letters for not living up to the new life that is in them. Most of all, Paul preached "good news"—not good news in the sense that it makes things easier for us, but rather good news that demands far more of us than we would ever demand of ourselves. The good news Paul would likely preach in L.A. is about Who Jesus Christ really is, and what God is doing in the world.

Imagine Paul badly dressed, unshaven, having spent the night sleeping on the road outside of town. Having once been quite well-to-do, he would know how bad he now looked. So he would try to ignore the disdain with which his words would, at least at first, be received.

The good news, Paul might tell the skeptical Los Angelenos around him, is that God loves every human, each made in His image and given a high freedom. You Americans do not recognize your own dignity, he might declare. Fate did not make you what you are. The stars do not tell you what to do. Each of you is a distinct individual, responsible for his destiny. True freedom is to do what you ought to do, and to love one another as God has loved us. It may seem like freedom to obey your own passions and to love only yourself, but if you have tried that, you know it is slavery. Christ died to make you free. Be worthy of that.

Paul would shudder at how grossly television, movies, and magazines portray the profound action of sexual love. He would probably marvel that with such powerfully destructive portraits of intimacy in our midst, we still have not destroyed all our families and all our sense of dignity and self-control. He would wonder how such a people as we, if we actually live in this slavery, could think they were free. But he would also take comfort from how many good people live around the country—and how well, in some places, the "good news" is still being preached.

But you probably don't think a current-day Paul would have the guts to go to Los Angeles. "He would be handed his head," you say. Well, that's exactly what happened to him in Rome under the Emperor Nero, a full 1935 years ago. Nonetheless, we are now celebrating the second millennium of Paul's master.

And Paul's still going strong. Millions of Americans, including Los Angelenos, read his works every day. It doesn't take long to read the enduring words of Paul, a total of 13 letters, some quite short. If you save *Romans*, which is 60 pages, for last, most of the rest are ten pages or fewer.

Michael Novak is a Jewett scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

EDITH WHARTON

By Noemie Emery

What would American novelist Edith Wharton have made of the Bill Clinton '90s? Possibly, more than you think. Her forte was social and domestic drama, and the Clintons have produced nothing but. Other Presidents have borne real crises: world war, cold war, Cuba, Berlin, segregation, depression. Clinton's crises read like a series of hurricanes: Gennifer, Paula, Kathleen, Juanita, Monica—the last a truly huge tropical disturbance that nearly upended his residence. Mrs. Wharton wrote about marriages based upon bargains; the Clinton marriage could have kept her scribbling for decades.

Wharton was born to an old, stuffy family and grew up just as her social class was being swamped by a tide of new money. Her great subject was class warfare. Social mobility is the American saga; it is a form that Bill Clinton of Hot Springs, following George Bush of Andover, seems neatly to illustrate.

There is a long pattern here. George Washington was not a born aristocrat, but a self-made man who became one. He and his protégé Alexander Hamilton are object lessons in the ways poor boys from marginal backgrounds can attract powerful patrons—and go on to marry rich wives. With a few exceptions like George Bush and Wharton's great friend Theodore Roosevelt, American leaders have been social climbers, the peak being reached in the Camelot era, when the grandson of an Irish barkeep from Boston passed himself off as an upper-class figure. (He did this with the help of his wife, a woman from Newport, whose early conditions—raised penniless amid money, a beauty addicted to luxury—eerily repeat those Wharton gave one of her heroines, the doomed and lovely Lily Bart in *The House of Mirth*.) From Jackson and Lincoln to Truman, Ike, and Ronald Reagan, poor boys in this country have learned to live up to high office, to use the right fork, and to hold their own chatting with royalty. The Clintons are the first to show this in reverse: that the humble can rise, and become *more* vulgar; rising, it seems, to new depths.

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The Clintons are part of a failed social project, a misguided but wholly American effort to force a new ruling class built on merit, as measured in good grades at school. This was based on the notion that merit equals brainpower, as shown early in high school. The idea was to find, groom, train, and empower children of all classes who showed early talent, and through testing and scholarships put them on track to hold power.

The defect is that this system depends on an academic intelligence that does not tend to mark leaders of men. Many gifted leaders bloom late and have their peak learning periods in middle age. George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, FDR, JFK, and Ronald Reagan did not test well or bloom early. They won gentleman's Cs, messed around, and did not come into focus until later, doing most of their learning in their forties and later. This kind of intelligence is less detailed, and more fluid. This kind of intelligence gives you Lend-Lease and the Emancipation Proclamation. The other kind gives you the Clinton health plan.

Wharton wrote about marriages based upon bargains; the Clinton marriage could have kept her scribbling for decades

But if the Clintons will quickly dissuade you of the idea that schoolroom smarts are real intelligence, they will dissuade you even faster of the theory that intelligence of any kind yields class. The most academically credentialled First Couple in history, they are also by a long shot the trashiest, surpassing even the Warren G. Hardings—their sole competition—in this important regard.

In his appreciation of Edith Wharton, novelist Louis Auchincloss says, "What she had always wanted...was a society where ideas could be freely and continually exchanged, but where that exchange would be regulated by rules of good taste and good manners, in houses that were beautiful, and at tables where the food was choice." That's hardly the case at the Clinton White House, where moronic film figures, drug dealers, and sitcom queens were entertained in the Map Room for money, and bounced up and down on Lincoln's bed.

In *The House of Mirth*, Wharton has a character muse on the relative status of two social climbers, Grenier and Rosedale:

> That Grenier house, now—a typical rung in the social ladder. The man who built it came from a milieu where all the dishes are put on the table at once. His façade is a complete architectural meal. If he had omitted a style, his friends might have thought the money had given out. Not a bad purchase for Rosedale, though: attracts attention and awes the Western sightseer. By and by, he'll get out of that phase, and want something the crowd will pass, and the few pause before.

Mrs. Wharton,whose first book was about interior decor, would not approve of what Mark Hampton of Little Rock did to the interior White House. The only thing missing are cars up on blocks on the lawn.

But aesthetic *faux pas* are the least of the problems. As Auchincloss says, "she saw the new rich...as the peculiarly corrupting force. Their limitless fortunes and equally limitless vulgarity seemed to sweep away not only the standards of taste and decorum, but the old standards of morality." The Clintons are F. Scott Fitzgerald's "careless people," who tear like the wind through the lives they come close to, leaving wrecked reputations, legal bills, and ruin in their wake. Nominees are named and then dropped, friends are discarded, inconvenient people are threatened; aides are dragged through the mud; servants are fired, sometimes while charged with fictitious crimes.

Southern boy Bill may be more in the vein of a Robert Penn Warren, but Yankee Edith drew a perfect bead on Hillary in her anti-heroine Undine Spragg (*The Custom of the Country*). Spragg, summarizes Auchincloss, is

> made of alloy, and as sentimental in judging herself as she is ruthless in judging others....No amount of exposure to cultivated persons can ripple the surface of her infinite vulgarity. She never knows the toll in human misery of her advance to the social heights, for she never looks back. The past ceases to exist for her....Undine gets into more dangerous corners than Lily Bart, but by miscalculation rather than inertia, and the same shrewd, ruthless cerebration that gets her in can be counted on to get her out."

Well, maybe not always.

What would Mrs. Wharton have made of the Clintons? No doubt, a really good novel. But perhaps she already has.

Noemie Emery is writing a book on political dynasties.

Novelist **Edith Wharton** (1862–1937)

Corbis/Bettman

H. L. MENCKEN

By Terry Teachout

Sooner or later, every American journalist gets around to writing this essay. The Mencken Room of Baltimore's Enoch Pratt Free Library now houses more than 200 scrapbooks containing every newspaper and magazine article written about H. L. Mencken since 1903. A high percentage of these are what I call IMWATs—short for "If Mencken Were Alive Today." The form is as strict as a sonnet: the author describes some current outrage, imagines the scalding things Mencken might have had to say about it, recalls a few other recent offenses against common sense, suggests the world would be a better place IMWAT, then closes by remarking that no modern-day newspaper would dare hire so politically incorrect a columnist.

Mencken averaged at least one opinion column a week from 1910 to 1941. As a result, anyone passably familiar with his

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published work can knock together an IMWAT stuffed with quotations that have an unnervingly contemporary ring. But as you may have guessed, I don't much care for IMWATs, which tend to have more to do with the prejudices of their authors than anything Mencken might actually have thought. So instead of idly speculating on what the editor of the most influential American magazine of the '20s would have had to say about such edifying phenomena of the '90s as Monica Lewinsky, rap music, or compassionate conservatism, I'd rather approach the subject from another angle: is there anything about the '90s that would have *surprised* Mencken?

One thing that surprised me when I began writing his biography—though it shouldn't have—is that he was lying when he claimed to take a detached view of the American scene. It was one of his stock routines ("*Q.* If you find so much that is unworthy of reverence in the United States, then why do you live here? *A.* Why do men go to zoos?"), and it was purest hooey. In his way, Mencken was an old-fashioned moralist through and through, and the gross philistinism of America circa 1920 disgusted him. That's why we can still read his Babbitt-bashing with profit and amusement: if he hadn't cared, we wouldn't, either. Nor did he grow more equable in old age; indeed, Franklin D. Roosevelt's brand of statism made him so angry he found himself incapable of laughing about it. His unpublished notes about Roosevelt are even more sulphurous than his columns for the *Baltimore Sun*, which are themselves far tougher than is generally realized. He believed quite seriously that as a result of FDR's demagogy, outright dictatorship of one kind or another was not far away:

> Can we put down the New Deal raid within the form of constitutional government? If things go on as they are going we'll end eventually and inevitably in universal ruin, with nothing to follow save a kind of communism. But if we resist we'll head almost as certainly toward some sort of fascism. This is the choice that has been forced upon us by political mountebanks. There seems to be no other way out.

Given Mencken's extreme pessimism, I think what would surprise him most about the '90s is that 60 years after he wrote those grim words, the House and Senate are controlled by a political party that is more or less conservative. To be sure, he thought it possible—barely—that "when the New Deal imposture blows up at last, as it is sure to do soon or late," his beliefs might someday have "a kind of revival." But he didn't expect that to happen any time soon. And he was wrong: Mencken's libertarian social and political views, long thought irreversibly outdated, are once again a force to be reckoned with.

This is not to say he would have swallowed the conservative intellectual movement whole, much less the post-Reagan GOP. His isolationism would have fit as poorly into current right-wing thinking as does Pat Buchanan's; his lifelong hostility to revealed religion would surely have inspired him to write with ferocious contempt of the Religious Right. I suspect, too,he would have found Ronald Reagan far too corny for his own robustly cynical tastes (though I was delighted to discover in the course of my research that he regarded the equally corny Dwight Eisenhower as a "better than average" President who was doing well "for a general"). Even so, I feel certain that whatever his reservations about contemporary conservatism, Mencken would undoubtedly have recognized it as a blood relative, however distant, to the laissez-faire social Darwinism he preached with impressive consistency throughout his half-century as a journalist.

So that is my IMWAT: if America's greatest journalist were alive today, I think he would be astonished to learn that the United States in 1999 had not in fact become the left-wing garrison state of his nightmares, but is continuing to lurch uncertainly down the middle of the democratic road, nudged rightward by a political and intellectual movement that had only just begun to take shape at the time of his death in 1956. He might even be relieved—though he'd never admit it.

Terry Teachout is the music critic of Commentary *and a contributor to* Time. *He is writing* H. L. Mencken: A Life.

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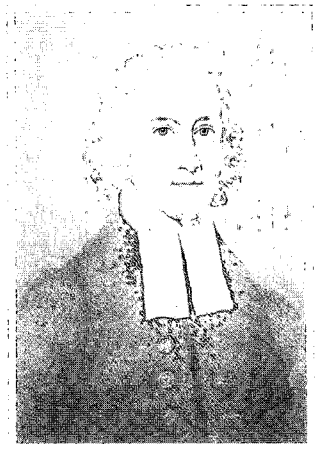
Journalist **H.L. Mencken** (1880–1956)

JONATHAN EDWARDS

By Roger Lundin

What would the great eighteenth-century preacher Jonathan Edwards have made of a decade which began with a Supreme Court nomination threatened by talk of pubic hair on a Coke can and ended with a Presidency almost brought down by a semen-stained dress? That's not to mention a war in the Persian Gulf at the decade's opening and one in the Balkans at its close, with years of AIDS, affluence, and the World Wide Web in between. What sense would this quintessential Puritan, one of the greatest philosophical minds this nation has ever produced, have made of the bewildering events of contemporary American life?

While the facile response might be, "None," in truth Edwards would have understood this decade all too well. Some of its silly shenanigans and heartbreaking atrocities would have saddened him, and many of its technological breakthroughs might have amazed him, but the events of the past ten years would not have been beyond his understanding. For there is precious little in contemporary moral life that Edwards had not already imagined 250 years ago. For him, the challenge was to reconcile the inscrutable will of God with the devious ways of men, and today his task would be the same.



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Puritan **Jonathan Edwards** (1703–1758)

Edwards was born into a Puritan culture acutely

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aware of its failures and convinced of its decline. He spent a lifetime trying to revive Calvinist doctrine and Puritan practices in a world increasingly indifferent to them. More profoundly than any contemporary, Edwards understood both the vagaries of human nature and the audacities of Puritan expectations.

At the heart of those expectations was a hope that the Kingdom of God could at last be established—in New England. Edwards' Puritan ancestors believed that the thousand-year reign of Christ prophesied in the Book of Revelation would come about as a result of their ardent efforts to obey God and purify the church. They cultivated a covenantal relationship with God. As their leader John Winthrop memorably put it in a 1630 sermon, God had drawn up "articles,...ratified this covenant, and sealed our commission." If the Puritans were faithful, God would bless them and make them a glorious "city upon a hill," but if they rebelled, he would surely "break out in wrath against" them.

There is precious little in contemporary moral life that Jonathan Edwards had not already imagined 250 years ago.

As the decades wore on, it became clear to the Puritans' friends and foes alike that the kingdom had not come. So by 1701, when Edwards was born, the Puritans' heirs had begun to make their peace with a burgeoning culture they could no longer control. Edwards's own grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, for example, abandoned Puritan restrictions on access to communion at his Northampton, Massachusetts church. In treating communion as a "converting ordinance," Stoddard sought to shepherd the doubting and indifferent in the larger culture back into the church's fold.

We do not know what Edwards thought of Stoddard's practice as he assumed his grandfather's pulpit in the late 1720s. But we do know he eventually rejected that precedent, and Edwards paid with his job for that decision. He was dismissed from his pulpit in 1750 and effectively banished to the wilderness—Stockbridge, Massachusetts, at the time—to minister to Indian tribes. While there, in 1750-57, Edwards wrote many of his most enduring works, including the monumental *Freedom of the Will.* In January 1758, he reluctantly assumed the presidency of the College of New Jersey (Princeton). Early in his term, he was inoculated against smallpox and died within weeks, on March 22, 1758.

At first glance, such a life might seem to have scant relevance for 1990s America. After all, in a decade that has seen a President treat his own shame and impeachment not as a cause for resignation but as a badge of honor, what can we make of a man who sacrificed his beloved vocation for an ecclesiastical principle? Similarly, name a major American university president of the past decade who believed in original sin and persistently articulated that belief. In certain ways, Edwards would clearly be out of his element in our world.

Many '90s Americans claim an indifferent material necessity governs the world, and that this unfeeling force cares not a whit what humans do with their bodies, their time, their dead, and their unborn. Meanwhile, Edwards' idealism was as deep as his fear of materialism was strong. He argued that "an universal determining providence" shaped history and human destiny. He saw the self as a dynamic and harried actor in a drama of cosmic consequences, whereas America today celebrates the self as a "construct" of infinite pliability and potential.

Trendy '90s philosopher Richard Rorty, for instance, argues that we can make ourselves into what we will. Given that "the nature of truth," "the nature of man," and the nature of God" are inherently "unprofitable topic[s]," Rorty recommends that "we in fact *say* little about these topics, and see how we get on."

How, then, have we been getting on? And what might Edwards make of our condition? Consider two events from the last week of August 1999. In one case, a California woman faced trial and possible prison time for a crime against life; namely stomping on mice and rats in what they call in the pornography trade a "crush video." (There are, apparently, men who get sexual pleasure from such things.)

Only days after this woman was indicted, the Supreme Court of Arizona ruled that a 14-year-old ward of the court could travel to Kansas to abort the 24-week-old fetus she was carrying. The mother had requested an abortion at 14 weeks but then ran away, only to resurface two months later, claiming that her child was the product of a rape and that she, the mother, had used "myriad illegal drugs." A majority on Arizona's highest court cleared the way for her to have the abortion, without requiring that it be "determined whether her fetus can survive outside the womb."

In these incidents, Edwards would recognize the consequences of viewing human life as having no real origin or destiny beyond itself. Such a view may at first seem to promote liberty by portraying individuals as unimpeded by past or future. But in reality it binds the self to an understanding of life as meaningless. If you are fortunate enough to have life, you have a right to it. But if you do not yet possess it or have lost it, you are of no account whatsoever. For that reason, and that reason alone, a rodent with blood coursing through its veins is more valuable in the sight of the law, and in the eyes of the culture, than a child with the potential to be born, to suffer, to love, and to know the presence of God.

Edwards would find this a curious state of affairs indeed. And he might respond today as he did more than two centuries ago, when meditating on the destiny of humankind. "There is a wonderful analogy," he wrote in *Images or Shadows of Divine Things,* in "what is seen in rivers, their gathering from innumerable small branches...and all at length discharging themselves at one mouth into the same ocean. Here is lively represented how all things tend to one, even to God, the boundless ocean, which they can add nothing to."

Edwards, I believe, would have a remarkably clear-sighted view of our decade, for he would understand better than we often seem to ourselves, whence we have come and where we are to go.

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ADAM SMITH

By Ben Stein

In 1776, without the benefit of word processing, the Internet, or Starbucks Coffee, three of the four greatest non-fiction works in the English language were published. In America, Thomas Jefferson, with some help, wrote the Declaration of Independence. In Great Britain, Gibbon produced his masterpiece, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. And in Scotland, Adam Smith wrote *The Wealth of Nations*, by far the most important work of political economy ever published. (The fourth and perhaps most important document of all, the U.S. Constitution, came about a decade later.)

Adam Smith did not lay out a framework for a society that would make life perfect. He sketched what had already happened and explained why it worked.

In simple terms, the three great works of 1776 agreed on one important point: that man is far better off operating without arbitrary and comprehensive control by government, and that just as individuals are better off making their own decisions (always restrained by a wish to deserve the "decent respects" of the "opinions of mankind," as the Declaration put it), so too do nations prosper better if citizens are left largely to their own devices.

As every school child used to know, the Declaration of Independence said that American colonists were suffering from arbitrary control by the British Crown, insisted it was in their interest to run their own affairs, and professed a willingness to go to armed rebellion to achieve that end.

The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire makes many points, but the central motif of the multi-volume work is that when the Emperor and his court began to rule Rome capriciously, the citizens lost their loyalty and their sense of initiative and discipline, so eventually the Empire fell to people with more spirit. If Rome had maintained the ingenuity, devotion, and bravery of the citizenry by foregoing inordinate control over their lives, the Empire would have lasted far longer.

Adam Smith made this same theme far more explicit in *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (a follow-on to his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, a brilliant effort to understand why people act nobly instead of like bandits all the time). *The Wealth of Nations* is a carefully crafted explanation of how a free society works and why such a society produces far more wealth than state-controlled societies such as England's great rival of the day, France.

Smith did not lay out a framework for revolutionary social change that would make life perfect. Instead he sketched what had already happened and explained why it worked so well. He described the historical antecedents of the free market society, what conflict had led to it, and what its flaws as well as its strengths were.

Smith argued that societies become great and prosperous when they guarantee the freedom of humans to freely contract for their labor and the use of their capital, without state or union or church or party control. To put it another way, those societies fail that require men and women to remain in a prescribed status. In the Britain of Smith, in the America of Reagan, people may do whatever work they want to do, whatever pays them the most, intrigues them the most. People can invest in what they want to invest in, or if they choose, not invest at all. In this way, men and women work with the most enthusiasm and ingenuity, and produce best.

The past 50 years in America have seen a spectacular improvement in this freedom to move from status to contract, and a corresponding growth in the prosperity of society. Smith would have approved the civil rights movement of the 1960s that took away restrictions on where non-whites, non-Christians, and women could work, live, and socialize. While Smith envisioned a minor role for the state, he saw reforms that remove traditional inhibitions against contractual freedom as a basic duty of government.

The micro-dictating laws that succeeded to the civil rights acts of the 1960s, however, would be as frightening to Smith, as would government manipulations of commerce. Were he alive in 1999, Smith would surely be depressed by a federal government that entitled women or minorities to a prosperity beyond that which they could earn via contract. He would view this as an egalitarian ruse that will limit the very freedom that led to the prosperous society able to offer women and blacks and Hispanics contractual equality in the first place. That would be a move back toward feudal society, where status determines success.

Will America, then, move in the direction of Hollywood and Silicon Valley, towns open to anyone who has aggression, hustle, and persistence regardless of race or sex? Or will we move to the American university model, where race, gender, and even parents' political background determine outcomes? Smith could tell you which will lead to a happier society. He could not tell you which direction a politically self-obsessed elite will take a nation.

For Smith's admirers, which should include every American, the challenge of the millennium will be whether we move forward or backward, whether we imitate the subject of Gibbon, or the subject of Jefferson.

A TAE *contributing writer, Ben Stein is a writer, actor, and lawyer.*

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Philosopher **Adam Smith** (1723–1790)

AGATHA CHRISTIE

By Robert Bork

The editors' choice of this topic, if not simply frivolous (a possibility by no means to be discounted), arises from some profound reason not shared with me. To make anything of this wretched assignment, it is necessary to invent a rationale: Perhaps Agatha Christie may serve as a fixed point from

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which to measure cultural change. Her best-known fictional detectives, the Belgian refugee Hercule Poirot and the English spinster Jane Marple, in somewhat exaggerated form, typify a time within living memory that is probably irretrievably lost. They have much in common aside from their implausibly frequent encounters with rigor mortis: Both would have despised the 1990s.

The primary passions of Poirot, the small, slightly rotund, dapper, gloriously mustachioed, exuberantly egotistical genius, were neatness and order. Confronted at breakfast with two eggs of different sizes, he finds his appetite destroyed by the gaudy asymmetry. As Captain Hastings, Poirot's dim stooge, said, "He has an absolute passion for neatness of any kind. If he sees an ornament set crookedly, or a speck of dust, even a slight disarray in someone's attire, it's absolute torture to him."

Miss Marple lives in the hamlet of St. Mary's Mead, which, contrary to popular belief in the unsophisticated goodness of rusticity, is a sinkhole of depravity, full to the brim with greed, lust, adultery, malice, treachery, and murder. Thus Marple remains unsurprised by the wickedness of the wider world into which she occasionally ventures. A chief inspector says of the demure and dithery Miss Marple that she has "a mind like a sewer"—rather like an eminent woman I know who constantly reminds herself that to understand today's Washington, one must learn to "think low."

The 1990s have been a decade of slaughter, as have most decades in this century, but Christie made a sumptuous living out of ingeniously transforming warm bodies into corpses. Both Poirot and Marple, accustomed to the odd body turning up here and there, deal with murder at retail while our decade supplies it wholesale, yet the principle is much the same. Christie's sleuths would been saddened by the massacres of this decade but utterly unastonished. Christie was careful to present her prim sleuths only with corpses decorously slain, "cozy murders." The real slaughters of this decade have been anything but decorous. Poirot and Marple would have found such gross lapses in aesthetic taste almost as horrendous as the deaths themselves.

But Poirot's torture would have been even more excruciating. What would he make of the meetings of the Modern Language Association, the nightly network news, the Republican and Democratic conventions, the President's fluctuating versions of reality, Hillary's '60s-speak, and the screeching of TV's talking heads? What would he have thought of backwards baseball caps, casual Fridays metastasizing into week-long slovenliness at major corporations, tongue studs, navel rings, rap music, and Jerry Springer? His little gray cells completely disarranged, the man would have been a walking nervous breakdown. He might have dyed his mustache orange, pulled on faded blue jeans (with an elasticized waist band), sported a nose ring, and become a candidate for admission to the local laughing academy. Or he would have been a candidate if he did not then look like much of the rest of the population. Today, he would more likely have been committed for wearing a wing collar, bow tie, and waistcoat.

"The truth of it is, one gets used to anything." Now there's a requiem for the lost world of Miss Marple and Hercule Poirot.

Which brings us to sex, as everything seems to today. It cannot be an accident that Marple and Poirot are celibates. Marple is a spinster, and it is better not even to try to imagine Poirot, mustache aquiver, advancing to, as he would put it, a "liaison," or, as the '90s would have it, a "hook up." Neither he nor Marple would have owned a television where, at any moment, one may be confronted by writhing, panting, half-naked embraces and ghastly mouth-chewing kisses by couples who have just met five minutes earlier and do not even know each other's last names. In the sexual revolution Dame Agatha's characters would have prayed for Thermidor.

Those of us of a certain age remember what life was like not too long ago—when men wore suits rather than T-shirts in elegant restaurants and professors offered logic and evidence, rather than ideology and deconstruction. It is comforting to have Poirot and Marple to remind us of vanished virtues, and to offer a trembling hope that some of them will one day reappear.

On the other hand, one cannot be sure of any of renascence of sanity and decorum. As Christie said about overcoming her tendency to faint as a nurse in an operating room, "The truth of it is one gets used to anything." Now there's a requiem for the world of Marple and Poirot and an ominous forecast of the staying power of the 1990s. Try not to think about it.

Robert Bork is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

Writer **Agatha Christie** (1891–1976)

Corbis/Bettman

LEONARDO da VINCI

By Frederick Turner

Leonardo da Vinci's testimony concerning the people of the downstream time, their customs and their most marvellous devices, from a newly discovered letter.

To his most learned and illustrious excellency, my lord Ludovico Sforza, Duke of Milan:

I send this by a trusted servant in the cipher we have agreed upon. I wish to inform your grace of a most wonderful visitation it has been my fortune to undergo, and the more terrible warning I must convey to you.

Let me say at once: Beware the King of France. He has designs against your state, and will, if what I have seen and heard has substance, seek your overthrow in the coming year. But I fear

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you shall not find this warning credible unless I give an account of its origin. Though you may think your servant mad or deceived by a demon, I offer the very wildness of this tale as proof of its veracity; since though as an artist of the brush I might imagine such a thing, I could not in words unless it were true.

I was visited three nights ago in my chamber by the spectre of a woman most outlandishly dressed—and to my thought immodestly—who told me in very poor Italian that she came from a time two thousands of years in advance of ours. She and her fellow-alchemists had arranged this visit to determine how that ancient painter Leonardo would react to the engines and devices of a time advanced after his own. They believed the marvels of their own time might overwhelm my reason, so they resolved to send me but 500 years forward.

Accordingly, she attached to me a curious apparatus and at once I saw through the eyes of a man of the twentieth century after Christ, in the year, I learned, of 1999. He dwelt in that country recently discovered by Christopher Columbus, in a city called New York—for to my dismay it appeared that the English, and not our Italians nor even our allies the Spanish, had placed colonies in that land.

What marvels I saw I must reserve for a broader account. Yet I must make mention here of their prodigious devices—flying machines that carry 400 people; boxes that show in movement, life, and color the images of far off places; self-moving carriages; bridges and roadways of vast size; and buildings that, though in crude taste and style, and very dully ornamented, touched like the tower of Babel the very clouds themselves. I shall in my notebooks endeavor to entertain your grace with pictures and plans of what I saw, though they use most marvellous materials such as I have never seen, like to silver or ivory or perfect glass, which I shall not attempt to draw.

They have a very curious republic, in which each man is free to do almost anything he wishes; and yet they have a million laws; and their great liberty is external only, for they appear to have little freedom from the inner tyrannies of flesh and desire, and they can barely reason at all, so swayed are they by their wishes of the heart, their addictions, and their bodies. Though they are often of great age—I saw among them few children and youths, though they pay great worship to youth in their pictured plays and vulgar art—they are in many ways like children. They clothe themselves with easy garments that require no grace in the wearing, like peasants or boys. Their youth themselves wear rings and studs in their bodies, like the savages of Africa. Strangely, they are often quite pious in religion, but make little or no sacrifice of life for their faith, and a thousand creeds and rituals flourish without check. Their crafts and markets are most excellent; their poor are as rich as our prosperous citizens. They have had the most dreadful wars imaginable within living memory, but have forgotten them.

Their great liberty is external only, for they have little freedom from the inner tyrannies of the flesh.

Each one knows much of the technical art or academic study at which thay labor, but little else—a seller of prosciutto in the Milan street knows more of other nations, of matters of history and state, of languages, letters, arts, and machines, of mathematics, of general philosophy, than for the most part do they. Yet I—or the man whose mind I inhabited unawares—met a few persons of both sexes with great wisdom and astonishing knowledge. Their state, I mused, is like an animal, each organ specialized to its task, but not like a city of complete souls in a civil society. Their great wealth had often rather limited them than opened to them the heights of the liberal arts. You, my lord, know the world as deeply as do any of them, though they have the advantage of half a thousand years.

Their women are dressed and behave like our whores, but for a few I saw of humbler condition who seemed to have come from Cathay or Cipangu; yet I am certain that in their lives they are for the most part chaste and modest. They are very bold and have mastered the art of avoiding pregnancy, so that they carry themselves like wealthy bachelors. In truth, when I became accustomed to it, I found it not unpleasant; and their sodomite youth are likewise bold, open, and sometimes beautiful despite the crudity of their clothing.

Their sciences are prodigious; they have plumbed the depths of the heavens and probed the most infinitesimal grains of matter; they have unlocked the secrets of life and marvellously investigated every corner of the human body. In this work I must confess myself simply humbled. Yet how such people, each knowing little except the details of his own expertise, can produce such wonders of understanding is not given to me to know.

Their academic or court arts—they have no aristocracy, being a republic, but their universities take the place of our courts—are simpleminded and foolish. Court paintings, which command great prices, often represent no real thing, but are mere problems or diagrams of composition, proportion, or color, such as we of the Florentine or Milanese schools solve in our sketches and underdrawings, as parts of a full work. But their vulgar graphic arts, such as merchants use to advertise their wares, are often subtle and excellent. (They have a fine paint, called acrylic, like that ingenious method I invented for my great wall-painting of the Last Supper.)

Their court arts in general seem to affect a bitterness, a sarcasm or irony, that proves them in their eyes better than the mass of the people. Their court music, again, is without melody or harmony, and thus has no language to convey humanity or thought or feeling; but their vulgar music, though strange and beating like a smith's anvil or cobbler's last, is full of life and vigor, and sometimes beautiful; and the old music of

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Artist **Leonardo da Vinci** (1452–1519)

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a century or two before, which they marvellously recapture with subtle devices, is more excellent and perfect than any I have heard in our own time. They also make very splendid moving pictures, with actors that can move the heart and spirit, and fine music and delightful landscapes.

To sum them up: truly, my lord, if they could unite their technical excellence and wealth with our wisdom, they could enjoy an era of greatness more perfect than that of the Romans and the Greeks themselves. But since each one is but part of a full human being (I speak in general, for I met some with that roundness of education we expect of the true gentleman), I fear they must make altogether new schools or utterly change those they have if their great promise is to come to fruit. What they lack, with their crude and ugly straight lines in thought and art, is that turbulence of natural richness, the curling and whorling of air and water and life: the quality of beauty.

But in my account I neglect what I have learned that bears, my most gracious lord, upon your urgent safety and welfare. They have among them the most marvellous machine of all, called a computer—all I met had one, and treated it as of little amazement. Yet these machines can speak instantly, all to each other over the whole world; they contain all the knowledge of mankind; they can show plays and pageants and galleries of arts; and they can in some measure think as men do.

While the man I inhabited was consulting his device, I placed into his mind your name, hoping that your fame should have lasted until that time so that I might learn something of advantage to you. He wrote it into his machine, which found a manuscript in a barbarous kind of French that I could read. In the year 1499, it said, the French overthrew you and drove you from Milan. I beg you, my lord, use this intelligence to protect yourself and those that love you, including this,

your most humble and devoted servant,
Leonardo da Vinci

Frederick Turner is Founders Professor at the University of Texas, Dallas, and author of Natural Classicism.

In the difference between Robert Frost and Maya Angelou as inaugural bards lies much of the difference between 1960 America and 1990s America.

ROBERT FROST

By David Lehman

Like the two divergent paths in "The Road Not Taken," there are two Robert Frosts. The first is the genial white-haired sage who won Pulitzer Prizes and cultivated his image and his audience so skillfully that he made himself a national icon. He was the truth-telling New Hampshire farmer who had "a lover's quarrel with the world"; an old man with a shock of white hair who recited a great poem from memory during the 1961 inauguration of John F. Kennedy. In the public imagination Frost succeeded in identifying American poetry with himself.

But critics like Randall Jarrell thought there was a more interesting Frost. Jarrell disliked what he called his "Yankee Editorialist side," saying it "incarnates all the institutionalized complacency that Frost once mocked at and fled from." The side of Frost that Jarrell preferred was subtler and darker, sometimes even terrifying. It could be seen in his poems depicting a harsh and unforgiving nature against which human technology is a primitive weapon that can turn upon the man who uses it, as the chainsaw destroys the hand of the "big boy / Doing a man's work, though a child at heart" in the chilling poem "Out, Out —."

This visionary of nature continues to disturb our sleep. In stark contrast to '90s ecological homilies, he insists there is an antagonism between man and nature. Nature in Frost is malevolent by design and as alien to humanity as a huge buck crashing into a stream. Death calls to us in Frost's poems—it is as much a temptation as a threat in "After Apple-Picking" and "Birches." And home? "Home is the place where, when you have to go there, / They have to take you in." It was one of Frost's achievements in such lines to reach the very point at which sentiment approaches but does not cross over into sentimentality.

For a turn-of-the-century reader, Frost remains sublime, a bundle of contradictions with the poetic power sufficient to transcend them. Consider lines of pentameter as brilliant and moving as these:

Weep for what little things could make them glad

or

So was I once myself a swinger of birchers

or

But I am done with apple-picking now

Frost, who died in 1963 at age 89, wrote in poetic forms fashionably considered *passé* in 1999. Yet he was no less a modernist—and no less an Emersonian individualist—for being so thoroughly traditional in his form and rhetoric. And while he enjoyed '90s-style fame, and hungered for adoration, he had no illusions regarding celebrity. As he wrote in "Provide, Provide":

No memory of having starred
Atones for later disregard
Or keeps the end from being hard

Corbis/E.O. Hoppé

Poet **Robert Frost** (1874–1963)

The public Frost—the ego-driven, opinionated, self-made "Yankee editorialist"—has many things to teach us. In our age of hype he would perhaps have to make a virtue of his political incorrectness. The poem Frost recited at JFK's inauguration, "The Gift Outright," was a picture of

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American manifest destiny. It begins, "The land was ours before we were the land's." It is difficult to imagine hearing this poem when the next President is sworn in.

In the difference between Frost and Maya Angelou as inaugural bards lies much of the difference between Jack Kennedy and Bill Clinton, between 1960 America and 1990s America. Frost's scorn of liberalism as a form of sentimentality would presumably be as sharp-toothed today as when he teased, in "The Lesson for Today" (1942):

> I'm liberal. You, you aristocrat,
> Won't know exactly what I mean by that.
> I mean so altruistically moral
> I never take my own side in a quarrel.

Two decades ago, film director Don Siegel attempted to transplant Frost's hard truths into a contemporary setting. His 1977 movie *Telefon* was set in the Cold War, amidst a seemingly permanent state of mutual hostility and dread between the superpowers. Russian agents trained to look, talk, and act like average Americans were scattered all over the United States, and each would enter a hypnotic trance when triggered by a curious phone call. At the sound of certain familiar rhyming lines, the agent would unearth long-hidden explosives and drive off on a suicidal bombing mission.

What words triggered this Kamikazi outburst? The last stanza of "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening":

> The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
> But I have promises to keep,
> And miles to go before I sleep,
> And miles to go before I sleep.

A felicitous choice—not only because of the associative resonance of "Frost" and "snow" with the "Cold War," and not only because Frost, in his last incarnation, was a Cold Warrior himself, but because the lines so calmly express the determined death wish that the movie characters act out.

Rereading Frost for the purpose of this essay I wrote a poem, "Beyond the Wall," which suggests how I imagine the steely Frost might have viewed our rather softer 1990s:

> I don't want a wall
> separating the Language
> poets from the New York
> School but you say good
> fences make good
> neighbors that's because
> at heart you're the last
> American to believe
> he stood at the center
> of the universe just by
> standing where he stood
> on some peripheral perch
> in the untamed wilderness
> of winter you see no reason
> to temper your scorn of us
> weaklings hooked on the drug
> of self you plant in spring
> reap in August and are grim
> as ever by November the wind
> howling in the leafless branches
> as you walk into the dark green
> woods and a woodstack appears
> across your path like a wall

David Lehman's forthcoming book, The Daily Mirror, *contains poems written since he embarked on the project of writing one every day.*

GEORGE ORWELL

By Christopher Hitchens

There is a mystery surrounding George Orwell's popularity in the United States, a country in which his name is almost invariably employed with respect and admiration, and in which the word *Orwellian* denotes either an attachment to principle or a prescient attitude to the present century.

Orwell never visited America. Nor did he show any interest in doing so. On most matters American he manifested a lifelong incuriosity. References to the United States in his journalism are almost always neutral or hostile, and directed either at the rise of a new imperialism or the spread of a new cultural vulgarity. Allusions in his novels—none of which contain an American character—are chiefly of the same kind. His contacts with the United States were filtered through the very small constituency of similarly minded *marxisant* and *trotskisant* dissidents who clustered around the old *Partisan Review*.

As he was dying, Orwell brooded about two American technological marvels: the atomic bomb, about which he entertained the gravest misgivings, and the hard-to-come-by medicine streptomycin, which might have bought him a remission from the tuberculosis that killed him in early 1950 at age 46.

A half-forgotten tradition on the English left looked to America rather than Russia as the land of the revolution and the hope of the toilers. This tradition (which actually includes both Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels) begins with Thomas Paine, and was powerful enough to be remorselessly if clumsily satirized by Charles Dickens in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. In the late nineteenth century, socialist papers lauded the USA and urged the British Crown to abandon claims on Canada and allow the whole northern continent to share the blessings of free land, free labor, and political emancipation.

Corbis/Bettman

Author **George Orwell** (1903–1950)

This tendency died out around 1898, with the rise of the plutocracy (often the result of matrimonial alliances between American capital and British aristocrats) and the

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joint Anglo-American interest in the White Man's Burden that developed after President McKinley's acquisition of Cuba and the Philippines. Orwell showed no sign, even given his interest in the lost world of the pamphlet and of the political eccentric, of any awareness of this tradition. The most that can be said is that he was anti-anti-American, and often criticized anti-American propaganda in London for what it was. The most celebrated example is his response to the fellow-travelling whisper that American troops in wartime Britain were really there in order to act as strikebreakers; he commented crisply that only an intellectual could believe anything so stupid.

Orwell's dystopian and anti-Communist novels, *Animal Farm* and *1984*, have achieved near-canonical standing on these shores. But Orwell in his lifetime had little reason to be grateful for his American reception. The unofficial Ukrainian-language edition in which *Animal Farm* first appeared was seized by American forces in Germany from the camps for Ukrainian displaced persons and handed over to the Soviets to be destroyed. The Dial Press in New York returned the manuscript of the same novel with a brief note stating that animal fables did not find a ready market in America (my favorite publisher's rejection letter of all time).

Orwell recoiled from the sadism and power-worship he detected in American mass culture. In a 1946 review, he sounded a note of caution about cheap American comics for children, and lurid American movies. From remarks in letters to friends, in occasional columns, and in everyday journalism, one gains the impression that Orwell viewed the USA as large, friendly, and stupid, with a mean streak.

In a half-satirical piece in his *Tribune* column at the close of 1945, Orwell predicted the following for America:

> For some months an all-round orgy of spending, followed by a sudden economic crisis and huge-scale unemployment, complicated by over-rapid demobilisation. Growth of a formidable fascist movement, probably under military leadership, and, parallel with and hostile to this, growth of a Negro fascist movement, affiliated to kindred movements in Asia. All-round increase in anti-British feeling, which will be the one point on which all American factions will be in agreement. Increase—simultaneously and in the same people in isolationism and in imperialist sentiment.

Entries for other countries covered in this same forecast exclude the possibility that he was merely having fun. I detect in Orwell an unsorted set of impressions, derived almost equally from members of his colonial and military family who resented America's annexation of British power, and from those in his journalistic milieu who saw America as a circus of unbridled capitalist narcissism.

In Orwell's *1984*, the three superpowers of Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia were morally equivalent: Conducting a permanent conflict in order to coerce their subject populations. Orwell believed *both* that the developing Cold War was a fraud on that scale, *and* that there was only one side to be on in the last result—that of the United States against the USSR. This tension and contradiction makes his work worth re-reading, precisely because it is so honestly expressed and because he shares his confusions with his readers.

Thus, I believe Orwell's biggest surprise, surveying the 1990s, would be the ambivalent position of the United States, and the amazing conflicts within its state and society. The flatterer of Yeltsin and the liberator of Kosovo; the patron of NATO expansion and the armorer of People's China; the exporter of weapons and the boycotter of sweatshops; the headquarters of human-rights lawyers and the abstainer on the War Crimes Tribunal; the home at once of the enthusiastic emitter and the world's largest green lobby; the isolationist culture with the interventionist itch. The magnet for the oppressed migrant and the safe-deposit box for the shady despot. An ostentatiously pious society with a firmly non-judgmental public morality. The last, worst, hope of mankind. The new-ish world called in to redress the balance of the older. The greatest subject for a journalist or novelist that there ever was—and he missed it, and it still took him to its warm old heart and gave his publishers the infinite revenue of which he never saw a penny piece.

Christopher Hitchens is a columnist for Vanity Fair *and* The Nation.

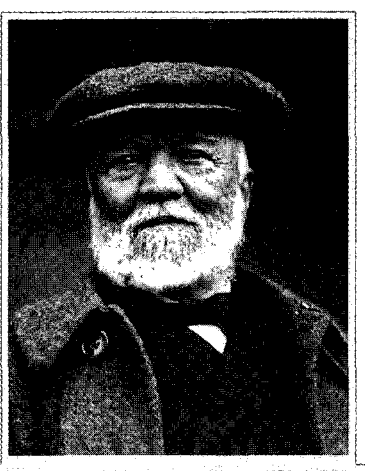
ANDREW CARNEGIE

By Martin Morse Wooster

Unlike most CEOs of his time (or ours), Andrew Carnegie was a prolific writer. Writing was his passion and his principal hobby; he derived great pleasure not just from being published, but from inviting leading editors to his New York mansion or his castle in Scotland to argue about the topics of the day. "I am golfing, fishing, *writing*," he wrote English politician John Morley in 1902, "the latter sweetest of all."

In his lifetime, Carnegie published nine books, including four collections of essays. After his death, his autobiography and two additional collections of essays were published. Carnegie, notes biographer Burton J. Hendrick, "was one of the few of mankind's great money-getters who had ideas beyond the daily balance-sheet...certainly it would be difficult to name any American millionaire with any bibliography like Carnegie's to his credit."

Philosophically, Carnegie called himself an "individualist." We would call him a classical liberal. He studied closely the works of Herbert Spencer, William Graham Sumner, and other champions of limited government. From them, he learned to support individual liberty, self-reliance, and free enterprise. He opposed both socialism and aristocracy. (The people Carnegie disliked most were those who lived off inherited wealth.) Carnegie's most problematic views were in foreign policy. He was an enthusiastic supporter of a movement to achieve world



Corbis/Bettman

Businessman **Andrew Carnegie** (1835–1919)

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peace by creating treaties that would submit all international disputes to binding arbitration, and he created the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in 1910. It's easy to see Carnegie supporting a strong World Court.

In domestic policy, Carnegie was more practical. He admired capitalism for constantly producing better goods at steadily falling prices. His longest work, *Triumphant Democracy* (1886; revised 1893) is a 500-page tribute to American ingenuity and prosperity.

Carnegie was what is now called "an early adapter." He was fascinated by new devices. Telephones, electric lights, central heating, telegraphs—Carnegie loved them all. "The first-class American residence of today in all its appointments excites the envy of the foreigner," he wrote. "Indeed, there is no palace or great mansion in Europe with half the conveniences and scientific appliances which characterize the best American mansions." Carnegie today would probably have a home filled with cutting-edge gadgets: computers, personal digital assistants, DVD players.

In a later book, *Problems of To-Day: Wealth, Labor, Socialism* (1908), Carnegie said he admired capitalism because it efficiently navigated changes no bureaucrat could even see coming. No state planner, he argued, could have produced the masterful inventions of Thomas Edison and his companies. By eliminating barriers, Carnegie argued, capitalism ensured that those with important ideas could rise to the top through hard work and ingenuity.

Carnegie believed it his duty to use his fortune to help those who wanted to improve themselves. He was fiercely opposed to government welfare programs. State-funded welfare, he wrote in *Triumphant Democracy*, would "favor the idle and improvident at the expense of the industrious and prudent....Whenever paupers regard charity as a right, they are apt to demand it in cases where they would hesitate to ask for favors."

In his most famous essay, "The Gospel of Wealth" (1889), Carnegie argued that philanthropists should, after deducting expenses for a modest life, give away most of their money during their lifetimes. But they should not randomly bestow funds on people they do not know. Instead, the "main consideration" of the philanthropist "should be to help those who cannot help themselves, to provide part of the means by which those who desire to improve may do so; to give those who desire to rise the aids by which they may rise; to assist, but rarely or never to do all." For Carnegie, libraries, hospitals, colleges, astronomical observatories, and the like would enrich the lives of many, and were thus worthy subjects for philanthropy.

Carnegie expanded on these views in his 1895 speech dedicating Pittsburgh's Carnegie Library. Philanthropy, he argued, should not be used to redistribute income. If a rich man divided his fortune into equal pieces and gave it to the poor, Carnegie believed, the end result would be to increase poverty, since many poor people would stop working once they received the handout.

Instead, he argued, the rich should use their wealth to help "the swimming tenth—the industrious workers who use their heads above water and help themselves, though sometimes requiring our assistance, which should never be withheld in times of accident, illness, or other exceptional cause, and always deserving our sympathy, attention, and recognition, and the outstretched hand of brotherhood."

America is the greatest subject for a journalist that there ever was—and Orwell missed it.

Andrew Carnegie would enjoy the 1990s. He would respect the new class of Internet billionaires, and admire all Americans who help the less fortunate. He would cheer welfare reform, and do his part to help those struggling to free themselves from poverty. And he would be astonished—and pleased—by the cornucopia of products for sale in the vibrant American marketplace.

Associate editor Martin Morse Wooster explores Carnegie's ideas in his book The Great Philanthropists and the Problem of Donor Intent.

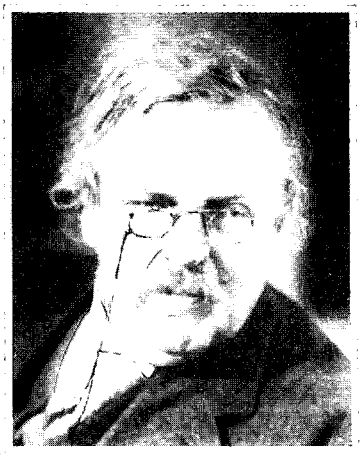
G. K. CHESTERTON

By Robert Royal

G. K. Chesterton became famous during the first third of this century as a British journalist, poet, and prolific writer of novels and essays. His best-known works are the Father Brown detective stories and the non-fiction works *Orthodoxy* and *The Everlasting Man,* the latter a profound influence on the young atheist C. S. Lewis, who went on to rival Chesterton as a Christian apologist.

GKC was a visionary who saw early in this century what the world would look like when modernism self-destructed. The most basic experiences and self-evident truths were about to be subverted. But he also predicted there would be a sane, popular reaction—driven by common sense, religious conviction, and an almost primeval impulse against the kind of intellectual foolishness that makes life unliveable. "Fires will be kindled to testify that two and two make four. Swords will be drawn to prove that leaves are green in summer." When the realities that are in front of everyone's eyes are denied, "We shall be of those who have seen and yet have believed."

Chesterton would have perfectly understood and applauded today's traditionalist backlash—from home-schooling to the fatherhood movement—as proof of an indestructible human sanity that returns despite all attempts to suppress it. Yet he would also see that our need for such initiatives means we are in considerable difficulty.



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Essayist **G. K. Chesterton** (1874-1936)

Chesterton understood that the reason many of these efforts revolve around the family is because the family is always

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the first—and last—line of true resistance. Everyone now pays lip service to the family, especially those who, like the Clintons, want to preserve the name while in fact dictating to mothers and fathers. The common talk about the need for greater "parental *involvement*" reveals that parents today are only accorded a kind of advisory status in a much broader process, a role to be overseen and limited by government authorities. We will know that people are serious about strong families only when the expression "parental *authority*" begins to be heard again in church pulpits, PTA meetings, and State of the Union addresses. Because without real parental authority, the family becomes a mere local franchise in the nationwide chain of liberalism.

Chesterton would have applauded today's traditionalist backlash as proof of an indestructible human sanity.

Restoring parental power inevitably leads to a reconsideration of government. Chesterton had no illusions about what politics usually entails: "All nations have had governments; and all nations have been ashamed of them." But there is a vast difference between governments that bumble their way towards a tolerable human existence, and those that virtually outlaw right living. When he visited America in the 1920s, Chesterton recognized that, because of the persistence of strong democratic and spiritual traditions, America had less to be ashamed of than most nations.

If he returned today, however, Chesterton would be astonished at the way we have slid into a worrisome libertinism in some areas, while enacting a harsh puritanism in others. Chesterton disliked Prohibition, but he did not live to see the one big Prohibition broken into myriad politically correct prohibitions. The shift is easy to observe. Any schoolteacher, librarian, merchant, or local politician now treads a fine line between an obstacle course of liberal etiquette and another whole set of words, acts, and ideas that are never, ever to be restrained. For example, if you ask your local librarian, who used to be the stern voice of community restraint, what books your child has been taking out of the library, you will likely receive a lecture on privacy and children's rights that could have been written by the ACLU, or in some cases Larry Flynt. The soul of a librarian today is probably not much different than in the past, but the community the librarian feels accountable to is no longer local middle-class people but rather a group of cultural elites who are sure smoking is wrong, but are relativists about pornography.

Many people, even many who call themselves conservative, believe these cultural problems are minor, compared to the great strengths of our nation. It's true we now enjoy a level of general prosperity that has put an end to what seemed until very recently like insoluble problems of scarcity. And despite our problems we stumble along in a mostly admirably democratic direction. These are no mean achievements, and Chesterton would have appreciated them.

But Chesterton reminded his readers that the modern world's greatest temptation is to fail to go to the root of a question. We think we can have "education," for example, without deciding what education is supposed to be for. We think prosperity in itself is a human good, without reference to what we use our wealth for. Our tendency is to say that individuals will decide such questions, not governments, as if that were the end of the question.

But individuals need guidance to help them uncover what is good and right. Moreover, we are not only individuals but also, inescapably, members of communities. In matters that affect us all, we all have to take an interest; yet, currently, community interests are often derided or ignored. Which is unfortunate, because local community decisions enable us to escape the extremes of an excessive individualism on the one hand, and overweening governmet control on the other.

Yet the minute we try to steer such a middle course, we are told America is too diverse, too large, and too complex to make social consensus possible. If that were true we might as well close up shop—because if we lack enough social cohesion to agree on some community standards, we don't have enough to make binding laws.

But we are not so fragmented as is often claimed. There never was perfect consensus among any democratic body about anything. A democracy means a system of government whose citizens constantly debate how they should live together. The claim that we lack current consensus is often just an argument against having a democratic conversation on certain subjects, primarily because some of us may not like the results it produces. If more democratic debates were permitted, we might find that the lack of consensus is a figment of the media's wish to manufacture controversy.

In the early 1990s, a television producer called and asked what I thought about politicians' lying to their constituents. I said I was against it. "Oh," she said, "I already have someone against lying. Do you know anybody who would be willing to go on the air to defend lying?" This occurred years before Bill Clinton became President, but what we now call the Clintonesque approach to truth which doubts whether there is an unambiguous case for anything was already taking root. Against this, Chesterton steps forward to tell us we must stand up in public and say, against all the principalities and powers, that two and two still make four, like it or not, and that we are willing to stake our lives and those of our children on that wild dogma.

Robert Royal is president of the Faith and Reason Institute, and author of The Virgin and the Dynamo.

JANE AUSTEN

By John O'Sullivan

An extract from the new novel Sense and Sensitivity *by Jane Austen (Timeshift Books, 1999).*

"You can be at no loss, Ms. Bennett, to understand the reason for my journey hither. Your own heart, your own conscience, must tell you why I come."

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Elizabeth gazed back with affected astonishment. "Indeed, you are mistaken, madam. I have not been at all able to account for the honor of seeing you here."

In departing from candor, Elizabeth felt only a small and readily suppressed sense of guilt. She knew well enough that there could be but one reason for Lady Catherine de Bourgh to descend from the Stilton chair in Postmodern Studies on the Princeton campus to Elizabeth's small East Village retreat. But her conviction that even the most hostile review should be gracefully accepted as part of the literary life was so entrenched that she could not bring herself to acknowledge the possibility that her ladyship intended to complain about a bit of criticism.

"You will be censured, slighted, and despised...."

But Lady Catherine was not to be deterred by mere cold civility, even supposing she had the faculty of gauging its temperature accurately. She strode past Elizabeth into the loft and flung herself on the recliner, even in that posture cutting a dominant figure in loose white silk shirt and blue jeans. Clad in the same professional uniform herself, Elizabeth was nonetheless aware that her own denim trousers had failed some recondite test of her ladyship's swift appraisal. Either their cut, or their shade of blue, or the address of their designer did not meet the subtler dictates of that hour's look. Elizabeth had to content herself with being merely comfortable. It was a comfort that was not to last long.

"You must not suppose, Ms. Bennett, that I am angry about your review of my book in *The New Criterion*. Nothing could be further from my mind. It is impossible that I should notice, let alone be wounded by, anything which appears in that extremist and repressive publication. Not when the book itself has been hailed as 'subversive' by the First Lady, and described as 'a hermeneutic establishing of the impossibility of good writing under late capitalism' by Princeton's Dean of Religious Studies in the *New York Times Book Review* itself."

"You have certainly elevated the capacity to ignore criticism to a high level," replied Elizabeth. "An admirable quality." Privately, she also thought it a very necessary quality in someone who had written *Literary Assholes: Re-(and de-)constructing the Phallic Imagination from Graffiti in the Men's Room* (Princeton University Press, $39.95). But Elizabeth's judgment of that book had not been widely shared, and Lady Catherine clearly felt that the weight of literary fashion was on her side.

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Novelist **Jane Austen** (1775–1817)

"Be that as it may, Ms. Bennett, nothing that appears in your so-called *Criterion* is read by any of those who have lifted themselves above the vulgar prejudices of sexism, racism, heterosexism, monoculturalism, and patriarchy. They are simply unaware of it."

"Then I can only trust that your ladyship's evident awareness of my review will not imperil your standing in their company."

"Ms. Bennett," replied her ladyship, in an angry tone. "My character has ever been celebrated for its sincerity and frankness, and in a cause of such moment as this I shall certainly not depart from that. A report of a most alarming nature reached me two days ago. I was told that you had been appointed to the membership of the Kerouac Prize Award Committee. Need I argue that it would be an impropriety of the most grotesque kind if you were to accept that position after publishing such an offense against sensitivity as your 'Not worth the paper...' essay? Are you not conscious, impudent woman, that you must now be deemed utterly unsuitable as a Kerouac judge, quite incapable of delivering an undiscriminating assessment of of of ..."

"Of such a book as *Literary Assholes*?" responded Elizabeth. "Rest assured, Lady Catherine, that if such an opportunity were to present itself to me, I should resign from the tribunal."

"If? If such an opportunity were to present itself? Are you so backward in your appreciation of modern literature as to be unaware it is a *certainty* that, that, that, that...my book will be among the final three selected, and that only the stubborn perversity of your adverse opinion threatens the ultimate prize that is its due? Your impudence, Ms. Bennett, promises to provoke a literary scandal of the first order."

"It would certainly be a scandal," replied Elizabeth, "if a potential competitor were to possess a knowledge of the Kerouac Prize Committee selection that was denied not only to other competitors but even to some of those on the committee itself. I wonder that your ladyship should encourage such a report."

Lady Catherine hesitated for a moment.

"Do not suppose, Ms. Bennett, that my resources are purely academic. My daughter, her fathers, and I have all placed substantial investments with the firm of Darcy, Bingley, and Wickham. We should not hesitate to remove them to more considerate brokers if our wishes were seriously flouted."

"As my husband has just informed me by e-mail from Hong Kong," said Elizabeth, "DBW has outperformed the market this year by a full 87 percent and will shortly be cited by *Forbes* as the most successful investment house of the new millennium. So if you should choose to reduce your income in order to sever connections with me, I would endure the sting with only moderate emotional discomfort and no financial loss at all. The business of a single investor, however wealthy, can no longer determine the fortunes of a counting house. But you may console yourself, Lady Catherine, that the multiplication of men and women of property which these statistics signify is the surest route to the social equality you have long demanded."

Lady Catherine, in addition to her academic distinction, cut a bold figure in the world by virtue of her liaisons with a succession of rock stars. She had, however, by an early and brief marriage produced a daughter who, despite suffering from the

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stigma of legitimacy, nonetheless endowed Lady Catherine with the authority of a single mother on all the great questions of the day. It was this shy creature, invariably to be found trailing submissively behind her mother to demonstrations and congressional hearings, who now unexpectedly intervened.

"Mama, may we not take Ms. Bennett at her word and rely upon her to renounce any influence on the adjudication of your book if it should come before the committee?"

"My daughter is an innocent in matters of business," Lady Catherine pronounced dryly. "She does not realize that such details as second serial rights, Hollywood options, and exclusive interviews with *Talk* magazine cannot be left to trust. They require the involvement of an experienced trial lawyer and the clarity of a signed contract. I must insist that we have your assurance in writing."

"I will make no such commitment."

"Obstinate woman. Do not imagine you can test even my long-suffering tolerance with impunity. You will be denied all entrance to the intellectual and literary world. You will not be asked to write for the major literary magazines. Nor will your own books be published by houses of the repute of Random House or Simon and Schuster. You will be censured, slighted, and despised by the Modern Literature Association. And you will not be admitted to any of the seminars that the leading post-modernists, including myself, are invited to stage at Duke University."

"These are heavy misfortunes indeed," replied Elizabeth. "But they cancel each other out."

John O'Sullivan is editor-at-large of National Review.

ALEXIS de TOCQUEVILLE

By Walter Berns

Alexis de Tocqueville was born in France in 1805, the son of aristocrats. During the French Revolution, his parents had been imprisoned, and his mother's father and grandfather had been executed. After the Restoration, King Louis XVIII recognized his father's title, but Alexis knew that aristocracy was finished and that France was destined to become a democracy. This perception had much to do with his visiting America in 1831. Tocqueville thought Europe, and France particularly, might profit from the American experience. America, he said, was the one country in which the "social revolution" was a fact already accomplished, and whose democratic "development" was most peaceful and complete.

Yet he knew democracy had weaknesses as well as strengths. He knew democracy requires public spiritedness, and worried whether it was possible to fashion a stable society out of free and naturally self-interested men. Aristocracy, he said, "made a chain of all the members of the community, from the peasant to the king; democracy breaks that chain and severs every link of it."

Because children acquire their manners primarily from mothers, Americans owe their prosperity to "the superiority of their women."

Tocqueville gave this problem a name: Individualism. Individualism is indigenous to democracy, yet Americans—the most democratic of all peoples—had found a way to combat its effects. He called it "self-interest rightly understood." It is not a lofty principle, he said, but suited to the "wants of the men of our time." American practices assumed that men are self-interested, but that they can come to see it as in their interest to help others. By doing so, they can feel good about themselves, and gain the esteem of their fellow citizens. In this way, Americans "almost always manage to combine their own advantage with that of their fellow citizens."

For a case in point, he could have mentioned Benjamin Franklin. Franklin founded a public library and, for the education of the young, an academy that became the University of Pennsylvania; organized a fire department for Philadelphia and promoted the paving and lighting of its streets; helped to finance a hospital; invented a better household stove (and refused to patent it); and finally, although 81 years old at the time, helped to write the U.S. Constitution. And for all this, his fellow citizens thought well of him. Franklin knew the use of being useful to others, and recommended the practice to all Americans. What he did has become a very American thing to do.

Our rich (Rockefeller, Carnegie, Mellon, Frick) do their good works by founding and supporting universities, libraries, and museums, and our middle class by working with the so-called service clubs (Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions) and other voluntary organizations and philanthropic enterprises. Americans have turned out to be a very generous people: According to *Giving USA*, individual Americans gave away almost $135 billion in 1998, not including the $26 billion given by various foundations and corporations. Tocqueville would praise these "small acts of self-denial."

Tocqueville found much to praise in America, the place of religion, for example. He said he did not know "whether all Americans have a sincere faith in their religion—for who can search the human heart?—but [was] certain that they hold it to be indispensable to the maintenance of republican institutions." He also admired the independent judiciary, for another example, because it serves as a barrier "against the tyranny of political assemblies"; and the American family, where children acquire the habits needed for healthy society. Because this critical work is done primarily under the tutelage of mothers, Tocqueville suggested that Americans owe their singular prosperity and growing strength to "the superiority of their women."

But he also warned that democracy's constant emphasis on equality will cause problems. Take the

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Political philosopher **Alexis de Tocqueville** (1805–1859)

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role of women. American women are less likely to carry out their distinctive and vital role of shaping national mores, he wrote, if they are given the same functions and duties as men, mixed with men in all occupations, pleasures, and business. "By thus attempting to make one sex equal to the other, both are degraded, and from so preposterous a medley of the works of nature nothing could ever result but weak men and disorderly women."

Tocqueville foresaw many things about America and democracy, including—and here especially one hopes he was mistaken—the man who has abandoned all striving, all aspirations, and all ideals, and is motivated only by the desire to preserve himself comfortably. In his chapter on the sort of despotism democratic nations have to fear, Tocqueville speaks of a multitude of men, "all equal and alike, incessantly endeavoring to procure the petty and paltry pleasures with which to glut their lives, and, above them, an immense and tutelary power which "provides for their security, foresees and supplies their necessities, facilitates their pleasures, manages their principal concerns, directs their industry, regulates the descent of property, and subdivides their inheritances." The principle of equality, he says, "has prepared men for these things…and often to look on them as benefits."

Sound familiar?

"He who is only an economist cannot be a good economist."

Walter Berns is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

FRIEDRICH HAYEK

By Thomas W. Hazlett

The 1990s opened with the demolition of the Iron Curtain and closed to the screeching of turbo-charged capitalist roadsters speeding breakneck down Information Superhighways. Friedrich August von Hayek could claim intellectual credit for forecasting—and encouraging—both developments.

F. A. Hayek was born in Austria in 1899 and educated as a lawyer and economist in the "Austrian" school of Carl Menger and Joseph Schumpeter. He took a professorship at the University of London in the late 1920s and became a British citizen as events turned ugly in Central Europe shortly thereafter. In the U.K., Hayek gained international repute for his work on the business cycle. Indeed, his debates with John Maynard Keynes of Cambridge University on the emerging field of "macroeconomics" made him the world's second most famous economist. When Keynes died in 1946, however, the post-war "Keynesian recovery" was well underway, the debates were over, and Hayek faded as a force in economics.

Hayek—who believed that "he who is only an economist cannot be a good economist"—would begin writing important works in psychology, political theory, law, history, scientific methodology, and public policy. He moved to the University of Chicago in 1950 to direct the prestigious Committee on Social Thought. Twelve years later he left Chicago to return to Europe, taking professorships at the Universities of Freiberg and Salzburg. When awarded the Nobel Prize in economics in 1974, the announcement stunned even Hayek; after all, he had not participated in formal economic analysis for nearly three decades.

His political views were carved in the famous "socialist calculation" debate of the 1920s. Along with his Austrian colleague Ludwig von Mises, Hayek argued that by abolishing private ownership of capital—the *sine qua non* of serious socialism—a system lost the ability to rationally allocate its economic resources. Advocates for planned economies answered "Thank you, but we've got that taken care of"—for instance, by having bureaucrats set prices. Presto: supply equals demand, scarce resources are allocated.

But Hayek was not buying. He formulated a pointed critique of both socialism and of the perfect markets of capitalist theory. Hayek found the pure logic of the textbooks unassailable, but totally disconnected from the real-life ways people discover technologies, differentiate products, and overcome lack of information to produce and trade successfully. Hayek's interest in the way complex problems actually get solved by common people led him to the seminal discovery that societies progress insofar as they motivate citizens to acquire and exploit knowledge.

Looming over Hayek's shoulder, however, was the Soviet Union, with its collectivizations, New Economic Plan, five-year schemes, central reforms, and so forth. Many academics failed to distinguish between real productivity and the "growth" proclaimed in socialist "plans." So it wasn't clear to them until the collapse of the communist dominoes in 1989-91 that flexible, individualistic societies make much more progress than top-down social hierarchies.

The '90s brought other Kodak moments for Hayek's scrapbook. Chief among them, delayed victory over the rival economic theory of Keynesianism. "Stagflation" in the 1970s had mugged Keynes and his theory that politicians could play inflation off against unemployment, running politically popular deficits on the alibi that they were "priming the economic pump." As a new consensus formed in the '90s that money growth must be tightly controlled to minimize inflation, and that budget deficits are no longer respectable as medicine, the nails were hammered into the Keynesian coffin.

Economist **Friedrich Hayek** (1899–1992)

Corbis/Hulton-Deutsch Collection

In micro-economics as well, Hayek had a good decade. He viewed economic activity as "exploration into the unknown, an attempt to discover new ways of doing things better." Economics was for him a very human under-

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taking. Other economists, charmed by what Hayek dubbed "scientism," often got on the wrong track by devoting their analyses to increasingly abstract models that miss the actual processes by which far-flung individuals coordinate their economic efforts.

Today, Silicon Valley gurus have built the future's most dynamic industries on Hayek's main insight: What is really valuable is information and the people who create it. Today we recognize that the key to economic success is to share knowledge and swim with the tides of spontaneous order and self-regulating market forces. Digital Hayek.

By living until 1992, Hayek began to see things turn in his direction. "I am more optimistic," he stated in 1977, "than I was 20 years ago, when nearly all the leaders of opinion wanted to move in the socialist direction. This has particularly changed in the younger generation."

At the end of the 1990s, vast privately owned resources are nurturing seedlings planted by visionaries. Profits and living standards are rising in one vibrant, virtuous circle. The dynamism of decentralism has buried the commissars. Score one for Friedrich.

Thomas W. Hazlett is an American Enterprise Institute resident scholar.

TEDDY ROOSEVELT

By David Brooks

One day in 1999, Theodore Roosevelt opened his eyes and found himself in the study of his home in Oyster Bay, New York. He had been dreaming about his son, Quentin, who had been shot down over France in the recently completed Great War. With a sigh, he heaved himself out of his chair and went to the lawn to visit the little memorial installed near the flagpole. As he was gazing down sadly, he heard a strange noise. It was a Boeing 767 making its final descent into La-Guardia airport, a few miles away.

T.R. looked up, agog. A jolt of electricity seemed to go through him and he ran back to the house, where he came upon a tour group. "I'm Theodore Roosevelt," he thundered. "Was that an aeroplane in the sky just now?"

"Man, he's good," thought the tourists. The guide, acclimatized to visitors convinced they were Roosevelt, affirmed it was indeed an airplane. "I was the first President to fly!" Teddy boasted, before striding off.

He began walking toward the town center, ignoring the automobiles, cell phones, convenience stores, and other marvels that might have caught his attention. At the central crossroads, he entered a bookstore. "I'm Teddy Roosevelt. I would like to see some books on aeroplanes," he thundered to the startled clerk.

The clerk brought him the new biography of Lindbergh and Tom Wolfe's *The Right Stuff*. Always a fast reader, Roosevelt pored through these books, and others on air power.

Roosevelt spent the first ten minutes of their meeting trying to horsewhip the President.

"I must see the President," he finally declared. A Pakistani cab driver offered to give him a ride to the airport, and they chatted amiably about superior and inferior races.

Roosevelt was enthralled by the flight. "Air power!" he exclaimed to his seat neighbor, a lobbyist from the National Logo Association. "I wasted my life on ships. I thought sea power was the key. Wrote those books. Built that stupid canal. Wasted all that money on the Navy. It was the romantic in me, looking backwards to the war of 1812 when I should have been looking ahead. Quentin could have told me, had he lived. How could I have been so blind?" He sliced meditatively into his bagel.

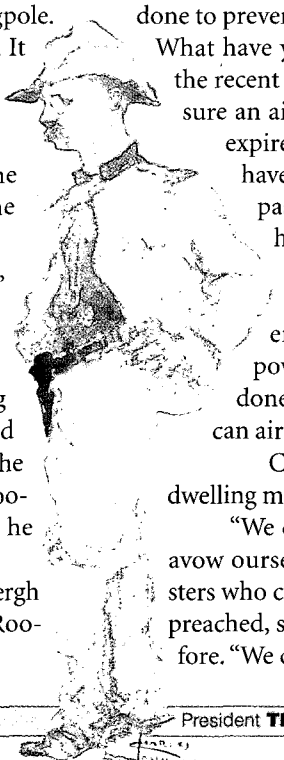
"I blame that idiot scribbler Herbert Croly. He told me everything was going to be centralized and consolidated. Big ports. Big cities. Sea lanes. But the airplane decentralizes, and satellites decentralize even more. If you control the air, you control the planet! The American empire has been built on air power—it started with the Wright brothers, continued with Lindbergh, air supremacy over Europe, Hiroshima, the space race, Desert Storm, satellite technology. I'm going to write another book! The sky is the arena where manly vigor can best display itself. It was the frontier of the twentieth century and it's not closed yet!"

Roosevelt landed at Reagan National Airport and was taken immediately to meet President Clinton. The photo-op aides had hurriedly arranged did not go as planned, though, since Roosevelt spent the first ten minutes of their meeting trying to horsewhip the President. "I once had to reprimand Quentin for disgracing this sacred house, and that was after he merely shot spitballs at the portraits!" T.R. screamed at Clinton, cowering behind a sofa.

Eventually, Roosevelt turned to business. "What are you doing to secure American mastery of the air? What have you done to prevent China from advancing her missile technology? What have you done to restock the weapons supplies after the recent action in Jugoslavia? What have you done to ensure an air defense system is functional before your term expires? What have you done to revamp NASA? What have you done to make the nation's airports glorious passageways that reflect American greatness? What have you done to modernize America's air travel network, and to confound Airbus and other foreign competitors? What have you done to modernize military thinking in the wake of the air power victories in Iraq and Kosovo? What have you done to develop a doctrine that will translate American air power into a coherent blueprint for empire?"

Clinton tried to mumble a list of achievements, dwelling mostly on the Family and Medical Leave Act.

"We cannot sit huddled within our own borders and avow ourselves merely an assemblage of well-to-do hucksters who care nothing for what happens beyond," Roosevelt preached, sensing he had uttered these words sometime before. "We cannot be content to rot by inches in ignoble ease



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President **Theodore Roosevelt** (1858–1919)

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within our borders, taking no interest in *what goes on* beyond them, sunk in a scrambling commercialism; heedless of the higher life, the life of aspiration, of toil and risk, busying ourselves only with the wants of our bodies for the day, until suddenly we should find that in this world the nation that has trained itself to a career on unwarlike and isolated ease is bound, in the end, to go down before other nations which have not lost the manly and adventurous qualities."

Clinton countered that perhaps the Rough Rider had not heard of his AmeriCorps program.

"Midget!" Roosevelt boomed. "Aim higher! In my day we aspired to dreams a thousand times greater than yours with but a millionth of your actual might. You bestride the globe and the greatest contribution you hope to make to the civilization of man is a government make-work? Let me take over this office. Better yet, I'll win it outright. Is there still a Republican Party? Surely the front-runner in that Grand Old Party is dreaming the big dreams, laying out the grand visions. Surely my old party is not content to wallow in these little schemes."

But just then the intercom buzzed. "It's the Republican leadership on line one," stated a secretary. "They want to cut a deal on rest-stop bathrooms in the interstate highway bill."

David Brooks is senior editor of The Weekly Standard.

The relativism and irrationality of the '90s would bother Freud, who was a man of reason.

SIGMUND FREUD

By Paul C. Vitz

If Sigmund Freud were alive today, his first reaction would be deep gratification at his widespread status as a cultural icon—the symbol of psychology in an American society clearly conquered by the therapeutic mentality. It is now widely agreed that childhood trauma can have important, usually destructive, effects on adult personality, and that psychotherapy can be helpful for many people. It would please Sigmund to know we are all Freudians now.

But beneath the surface of his enthusiasm would be disappointment at the superficiality of today's understanding of his thought. But he would not be surprised, given his low opinion of most of humanity. More offensive to him would be America's optimistic distortion of his fundamentally pessimistic worldview. He would be especially annoyed by the many professional psychologists and psychoanalysts who have pushed an upbeat, happy emphasis on the ego, as seen in calls for ego-strength, self-actualization, and the ubiquitous search for "self-esteem."

Freud, with his tragic view of the human condition, would interpret this cheery, consumer-oriented understanding of human psychology as a betrayal and a justification of his view of America as "a gigantic mistake." Freud, even at his most buoyant, cautioned that "the best that psychoanalysts can do is to return the patient to the normal level of misery."

Freud would, no doubt, praise today's American society for its less puritanical views, but would recoil from the contemporary strength of egalitarianism and especially feminism. Freud saw the U.S., even in his day, as a country run by a "petticoat government," and the growth of the women's movement in the decades since his death would appall him.

The relativism and irrationality of the '90s would at some level bother Freud, who was a man of reason and an ardent admirer of the Enlightenment. Unconsciously, however, he might have been pleased, since he was a great cynic and an early master of the postmodern attitude of suspicion of all authority.

Similarly, at the conscious level Freud would be harshly critical of the strength of religion today. This "Godless Jew" would have only scathing remarks for religious conservatives and the new energetic orthodox Judaism. Freud's hostility to religion was wide-reaching—he first took cocaine in liquid form on the night of the Witch's Sabbath, April 30, 1884, obviously mimicking a pact with the devil sealed in the same way and on the same night in Goethe's *Faust.*

But Freud also longed for "*der liebe Gott*" ("the loving God"), wanted to retire in Rome, his favorite city, and for years had his children and grandchildren put flowers in front of the statue of the Virgin Mary before they went mushroom hunting in the Vienna woods.

Freud would be angered by the popularity of today's new approaches to psychotherapy, especially the recent neglect of the unconscious. He would see this as a simple-minded regression to rationalistic theories of the mind. It might give him some comfort to retreat into the view that American civilization, with its almost uncontrolled expressions of sex and violence, was careening toward chaos.

Freud's ideas have been severely critiqued in recent years. It has been pointed out that psychoanalysis is fundamentally nonscientific, that it is more a kind of literary criticism, or even religion. While his theories interest many, they are no longer seen as having anything like universal validity. And there have been many personal criticisms of Freud, both as a scholar and as a man. Among other things, he often grossly misrepresented the evidence for his ideas—a serious moral flaw in a man claiming the mantle of science.

As the various critiques of his work became fully apparent to him, Freud would, I think, rec-

Corbis/Be man

Psychiatrist **Sigmund Freud** (1856–1939)

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ognize that his ideas, however compelling and influential they were for decades, have clearly waned in the 1990s. The Freud Boom, he would see, is over.

And yet this might not entirely disappoint him. Freud once said, "Don't you know I am the devil? I have had to play the devil all my life, so that others who come after me can take what I discovered and build a beautiful cathedral." That hopeful possibility remains to be seen.

Paul Vitz is professor of psychology at New York University.

In the name of children, incursions into our personal lives have been made that the Nazis would have gazed at open-mouthed.

ADOLF HITLER

By Rabbi Daniel Lapin

I have no intention of explaining how the correspondence which I now offer to the public fell into my hands. There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them.

—Preface to *The Screwtape Letters* by C. S. Lewis

My Dear Julius,

[Editor's note: Julius Streicher was a Nazi leader hanged after the Nuremberg trials]

Landsberg prison, which I entered on April 1, 1924, and where I wrote *Mein Kampf*, is strangely similar to this place I entered after shooting myself on April 30, 1945. I found myself in both places involuntarily, yet they have each provided me with peace as well as perspective.

As one tends to do in the timeless eternity of our existence here, I often reflect upon my single most regrettable error—underestimating America. Exactly one month after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor I told you at our Berlin headquarters that America is a decayed country. My feelings against Americanism were feelings of hatred and deep repugnance. Everything about the behavior of American society reveals that it's half Judaized and the other half Negrified. How can one expect a state like that to hold together? Well, America did somehow hold together and seized victory from us. However, and this is important my friend, she has finally adopted many of the vital ideas of our movement. Could not this be described as an ultimate vindication of all we lived and died for? Perhaps it is even a victory of sorts.

Let me explain. First and foremost we were socialists. As national socialists, or Nazis, we presumed that government and the people were hostile to one another. Thus, we understood that the old German tradition of citizens' owning guns had to end. On March 18, 1938, we enacted our Law on Weapons and ruled that only government agents may own firearms. You can imagine my approval as I watched Senator Thomas Dodd craft America's Gun Control Act of 1968 by having our own law of 1938 translated for him by an official of the Library of Congress. My dear Julius, we can be proud of how similarly the two laws read. Those gun control efforts are naive and well-meaning, but their results will resemble ours. We told the German people that gun control laws were needed to curb gang activity and preserve democracy, but what those laws did was help us prevail.

We Nazis understood that every German citizen must live for the state. And in the same way that wise farmers accept responsibility for the health of their herds, we used the power of government to keep our flocks healthy. We were disgusted by the addictive powers of cigarettes, since both mind and body were supposed to belong to the Führer. We succeeded in almost criminalizing the smoking of cigarettes.

Our Ministry of Science and Education ordered elementary schools to discuss the dangers of tobacco. Government-sponsored cultural and educational events were declared "smoke-free." In the late 1930s we called for increased taxes on cigarettes and later instituted bans on cigarette advertising. I am most proud of the legislation we introduced prohibiting sales of cigarettes to minors. We set up counseling centers for the psychological treatment of smokers, and we established smoke-free restaurants.

We soon managed to prohibit smoking on Luftwaffe properties and followed that with prohibiting smoking in post offices, government buildings, and many workplaces. In 1940, S.S. Chief Heinrich Himmler announced a smoking ban for all on-duty police and S.S. officers. Our comrade, Hermann Goering, decreed soldiers may not smoke in public, and most cities banned smoking on public transport in order to protect the ticket takers from second-hand smoke. We can indeed be proud that today America has also come to realize the importance of central government taking the initiative in regulating what people do not have the good sense to do voluntarily.

Do you remember that awkwardness in late 1940? The American consulate in Leipzig reported on our policy of conducting compassionate euthanasia on the patients in the Grafeneck Mental Asylum in Württemberg. What an uproar resulted in America! But now one of America's most prestigious institutions, Princeton University, has appointed as pro-

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Dictator **Adolf Hitler** (1889–1945)

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fessor of bioethics one Peter Singer, who openly advocates putting to death the mentally defective, the terminally ill, and even severely disabled infants. He would give parents and doctors the right to actually kill (not just withhold treatment from) newborns with, for instance, spina bifida and hemophilia. Singer insists a newborn has no greater right to life than pigs, cows, and dogs. So the ridiculous idea that all human life is sacred is now finally under attack in America. A sitting President was re-elected after affirming the legitimacy of exterminating infants during birth, and doctors in their province of Oregon have begun doing away with the elderly and weak. Yes, America is certainly coming around to our way of seeing things.

Duty, authority, discipline. Not exactly "I feel your pain."

Finally, dear Julius, you will remember what I frequently said and wrote in *Mein Kampf*: "The state must declare the child to be the most precious treasure of the people." I explained that as long as the government is perceived as working for the benefit of children, the people will happily endure almost any curtailment of liberty and almost any deprivation. It is truly heartwarming to see how well this lesson has been learned by the American government. In the name of children, incursions into the private lives of American citizens have been made that we Nazis would have gazed at with open-mouthed admiration. Does it matter that our bodies failed as long as our spirit still triumphs?

I know you have a question to ask me, my friend: What about the Jews? After all, how can I say that much of America is adopting our views when Jews still exert such disproportionate influence in that country? Grasp the genius of your Führer. You see, dear Julius, with well-meaning earnestness, most American Jews are solidly behind the ideas I have been describing. In the mistaken belief that they are making America safer for minorities, American Jews have joined those advocating ever larger and ever more powerful government. In reality, what they are doing is making America more hospitable to national socialism. When it eventually arrives, they too will see the real dangers, but then it will be too late. Now they only see danger in illiterate thugs with no hair on their heads. American Jews are frightened by a handful of the sort of people we used to execute, instead of being terrified of the institutionalized danger they are helping to create—government with limitless power that could one day be hospitable to tyranny.

We didn't just kill Jews—we were obsessed with them. We knew and understood the power their God conferred upon them. It was either their 3,000-old vision of holiness or our modern ideas of scientific progress that would prevail. Do you recall that Israeli thug, Isser Harel, who founded their cursed Mossad and captured our brother Eichmann in Buenos Aires in 1960? Harel was astounded when Eichmann, upon realizing that he had been captured by Jews, called out the Hebrew prayer *Shema Yisrael*, "Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One." Eichmann understood. You, Julius, you also understood. You ascended the gallows in Nuremberg and your very last words were "Heil Hitler!" (for which I thank you) and then "Purim Fest 1946." You knew that when the Allies hanged my ten friends, they were playing out a modern day version of the biblical book of Esther in which ten enemies of the Jews were hanged on the festival of Purim.

And it wasn't just the Jews. Joseph Goebbels put it quite well: "The Führer is deeply religious though completely anti-Christian. He views Christianity as a symptom of decay. Rightly so; it is a branch of the Jewish race."

We can be confident America will preserve and develop our Nazi ideas of scientific human perfectability because of one stroke of genius even Reich minister of propaganda, Goebbels has to admire: Those who are advocating socialism in America, whether deliberately or inadvertently, have succeeded in turning the term "Nazi" into a slur that may only be used against those on the right, such as Christian conservatives. Never is it used against those on the left who are precisely the Americans doing most to advance our agenda. We are winning Julius, we are winning. Heil Hitler.

Rabbi Daniel Lapin is the author of America's Real War.

VINCE LOMBARDI

By Curt Smith

The great football coach Vince Lombardi would abhor today's soft, empathetic, therapeutic culture. "Physical toughness will make the opponent weaken," he insisted, "mental toughness will make him crack." Would 1990s society spurn Lombardi as an anachronism, a *paterfamilias* in a feminized decade, sport's John Wayne in the age of soccer moms?

Born in Brooklyn 1913, Lombardi learned opera from his mother and self-denial from his father—"With him, there was only right and wrong, and he believed that you only did the right thing all the time." Lombardi the elder taught his son that "before you can exist as an individual, the first thing you have to accept is duty. The second thing is respect for authority. And the third thing is to develop a strong mental discipline."

Duty, authority, discipline. Not exactly "I feel your pain."

Vince never forgot his father's admonition that "Hurt is in the mind." While the '90s discourage anything that could dent self-esteem, failure was for Lombardi simply a side dish he declined to order. The man who went on to direct the Green Bay Packers began as an altar boy, lifeguard, and sandlot football regular. "From the start, he had leadership," sister Madeline once said of Vince's buck-tooth grin, volcanic temper, exuberance, and verbal skill.

"Fatigue," Lombardi orated, "makes cowards of us all." The harder you work, "the harder it is to surrender." "Confidence is contagious. So is lack of confidence."

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After graduating from Fordham in 1937, Vince taught high school Latin, physics, and football. Exams, he opined, should inspire "a weeping and gnashing of teeth." Then he became an assistant coach first at Fordham and then West Point.

From 1954-58, Lombardi was a New York Giants assistant coach. Pat Summerall, who joined the team in 1958, remembers a time when players were talking and "another assistant coach couldn't quiet the group. Then, this gentleman walked in and cleared his throat. The room went silent, and I said to the fellow next to me, 'Who the hell is that?' He said, 'Lombardi. You'll find out soon enough.'" Ten minutes after meeting him Summerall said, "If he tells me to run through the wall at Yankee Stadium, I will."

A year later, at 46, Lombardi finally received an NFL head coaching job. Arriving in Wisconsin, Vince told reporters, "Let's get one thing straight—I'm in control here." Straightaway he addressed Packers players. Quarterback Bart Starr soon found a pay phone and told his wife, "Honey, we're going to win."

The '58 Packers had been 1–10–1. In 1959, the Packers went 7–5. In 1960, they won the Western Conference. In the next seven years Lombardi won five NFL crowns, took the first two Super Bowls, and made his team the symbol of sporting dominance.

"Churchill said that everything he'd done in his life was preparation for World War II," said the late NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle. "The same was true of Lombardi at Green Bay." Vince relied partly on fear. In the Ice Bowl, 1967's famed NFL title game, the Packers braved minus-13 degree weather. Told of Dallas's frostbite, Lombardi barked, "Only losers get frostbite." One day a receiver was hurt and the Packers trainer rushed out to treat him. Vince started screaming, "Stay away! Let him get up and walk back like a man or crawl out of this league forever." Tackle Henry Jordan barbed memorably, "He treats us all the same—like dogs." Feminists would term Vince offensive. Lombardi would likely smile.

But craving his praise, the Pack forged an unparalleled unity. A special link among the men of Green Bay was faith. "Religion by itself isn't masculine," says a friend, "except that because it's absolute, not relative, today it's come to be *seen* as masculine." Lombardi told players, "There are three things important in life—your religion, family, and the Green Bay Packers—in that order. Your moral integrity is the most important thing you possess."

In December 1966, the Packers flew home after clinching the Western Conference. Willie Davis and Forrest Gregg started singing, "He's got the whole world in His hands." The chant became "We've got the best team...in the world," then "best coach." Lombardi rose and sang, "Best players."

Lombardi hailed football's violence, yet used "love" to explain the Packers' dynasty. Man, he said, "responds to leadership in a most remarkable way. Once you have won his heart, he will follow you anywhere."

Excuses were for losers. Life meant brooking grief, behaving in a manly way, and doing right because God decreed it.

In the '60s, success followed Lombardi as a heliotrope does the sun. "His influence eclipsed football," argued Rozelle. "It was a time when America was aflame, rent, and there he was, each week, on the sidelines, immovable, traditional, a rock."

In 1968 Lombardi said, "It is difficult to be tolerant of a society which has sympathy only for the misfits, the maladjusted, the criminal, the loser. Have sympathy, yes. Assist them, absolutely. But it's time we stood and cheered the doer, the leader, the winner." He disdained the counterculture's fakery, Godlessness, and contempt for law. "There's been a complete breakdown of morality," Lombardi snapped. Deriding draft dodgers, he started passing out small U.S. flags at parties.

To Lombardi, duty mattered. Vietnam was a test of character—whether America stood by an ally or left it to fend alone. Despising the hip, camp, and trendy intelligentsia, he rarely swore around women or told off-color jokes. Formal, and a daily Mass-goer, he would have disdained a President who talks about his boxers—and recoil at a nation that condones presidential lying and adultery. Says his younger brother Joe: "He would have been appalled, especially at our indifference."

Allan Nevins wrote of James Fenimore Cooper's *The Deerslayer*, "His America [seems] so far lost in time and change that it is hard to believe it ever existed." Ditto the coach who once studied for the priesthood. Lombardi disdained irresponsibility. Excuses were for losers. Life meant brooking grief, behaving in a manly way, and doing right because God decreed it.

Lombardi could be rigid and autocratic, but also, quoting Ronald Reagan on America, "hopeful, big-hearted, idealistic, daring, decent, and fair." He touted fidelity, reverence, excellence, and a fondness for the absolute. Amid today's softness of mind, weakness of soul, and onslaught against culture and convention, there are worse lessons to recall.

Curt Smith is a former presidential speechwriter and author of many books on sport.

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Coach **Vince Lombardi** (1913–1970)

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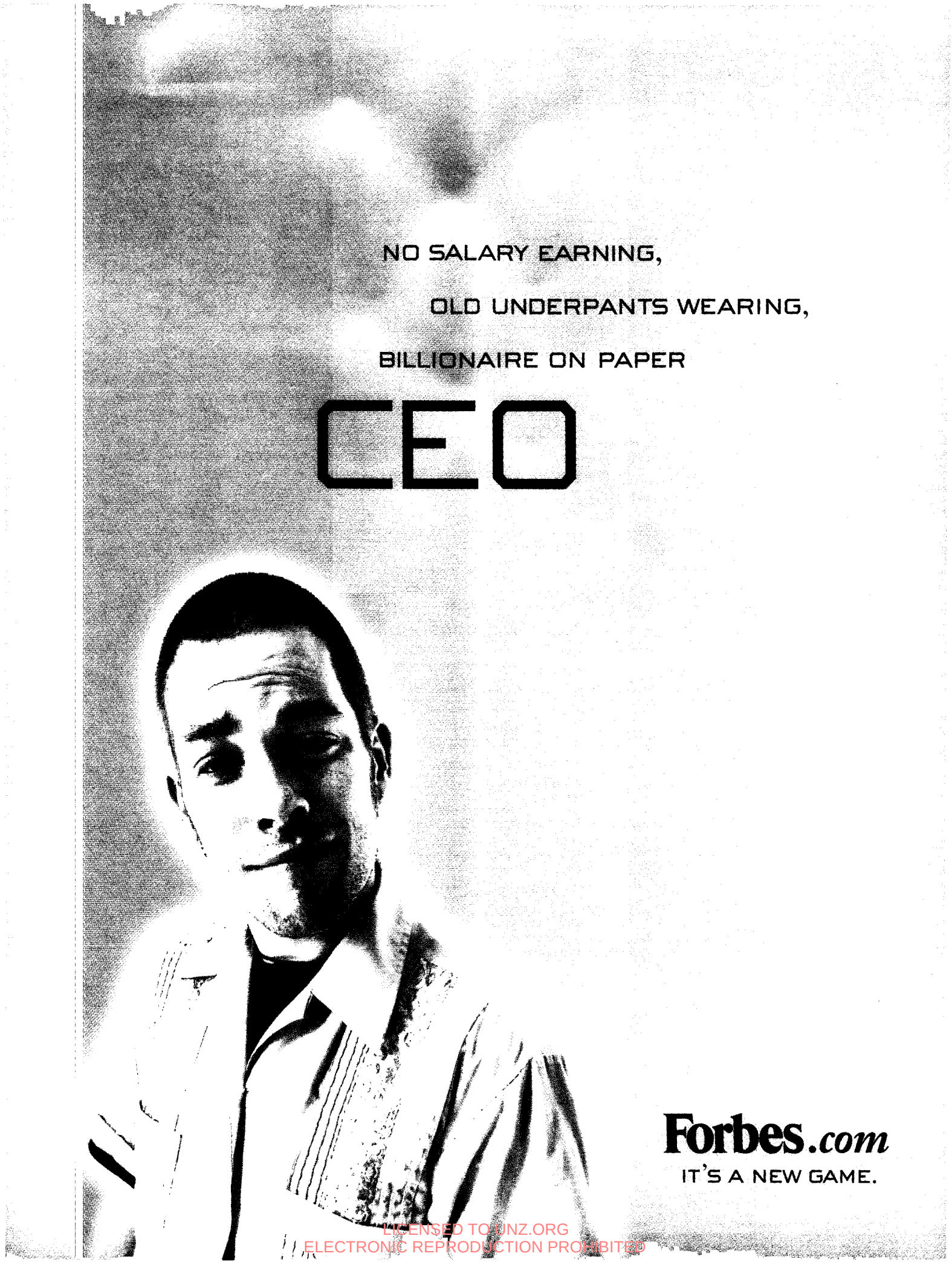
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A REPUBLICAN AGENDA FOR THE SUBURBS

Keep It Local, Stupid

Too many Republicans have only ridiculed Vice President Al Gore's stress on suburban problems. With most Americans now living in suburbs, the well-being of these regions is no trifle. In fact, neglect of suburbia's problems—including the loss of a sense of community, visual ugliness, traffic bottlenecks, declining schools, rising taxes—has arguably fed middle-American appetites for causes like environmentalism, feminism, higher school spending, and more government planning and controls. When they act as if they see nothing whatever that could be improved in suburbia, conservatives allow Al Gore and company to reap, by default, the benefits of a sham agenda aimed at "soccer moms."

Here as elsewhere conservatives should encourage deregulation, problem solving by local communities, and the empowerment of individuals rather than bureaucratic interventions. As Maryland Governor Albert Ritchie warned back in the 1920s: "Centralize government and men begin to lose interest in it. They begin to grow lax in defending their rights and administering their affairs. They begin to lose respect for law and for their law-making bodies. To blocs and organizations and militant minorities they surrender power they would themselves exercise if their local governments functioned."

If they had the wits, Republicans would advocate a whole cluster of local initiatives to improve suburban life. Here are a few specific proposals:

• Many foolish zoning prohibitions should be eliminated. For example, very small (1,000 square foot) shops and businesses should be permitted in residences, as Lancaster County, Pennsylvania and many European cities do. This helps parents who want to work at home, introduces convenient services and shopping alternatives into neighborhoods that are currently barren bedroom communities, and provides occupation for the young.

• Permit second kitchens and accessory apartments in residences, so that elderly relatives can enjoy privacy without being zoned far away from their loved ones. This can also help ease the child-care problems of suburban families.

• Both zoning and tax laws that discourage accessory apartments in homes should be reversed. Accessory apartments can help young families make mortgage payments, open good neighborhoods to young singles like beginning schoolteachers who have modest income, offer families of all kinds ways to care for their elderly, and so forth.

• Offer zoning solutions that would facilitate the village-within-the-metropolis, and the "New Urbanism" that encourages a "small town" model of development where housing is more naturally intermixed with services, and neighborliness is aided by physical layouts. The alleged American preference for tract housing—extolled by too many conservatives—is actually largely a product of governmental dictates like minimum-lot-size requirements and mixed-use prohibitions.

• All of these zoning reforms should be propagated the same way Herbert Hoover did when he was Secretary of Commerce in the 1920s: through the circulation of model state laws and local ordinances, not through federal coercion.

• Make lending and tax incentives more evenhanded. While the Federal Housing Administration's lending limit now exceeds $200,000 for single-family homes, the loan ceiling for accessory apartments is $25,000. Tax and lending laws promote sterile new construction in cornfields, while discouraging renovations and improvements in older neighborhoods.

• Provide tax credits for duplex housing and accessory apartments. These are a major feature of German and Japanese housing policies for the elderly, and are a way of increasing affordable housing without government payments or construction.

• Repeal the marriage penalty, and offer other tax relief connected to child rearing and family life.

• Overhaul the federal highway aid program, one of the great scandals of American government. The 80 percent federal match in this program is far higher than necessary to compensate states for use of their roads by out-of-state drivers, and affords them an irresistible incentive to over-build intercity roads they do not need rather than suburban bypasses and improvements that they do.

• Instead of putting in unpopular speed bumps, calm traffic by privatizing residential streets—as is done in St. Louis suburbs and Denmark—or by allowing abutting residents to regulate them, as Germany and Holland do. New Urbanist architects have many other good ideas for easing cars and people into more peaceful coexistence (encouraging street-side parking, putting garages in back, avoiding funnelled traffic, etc.) that could be encouraged.

• Encourage cooperative child care and nursery schools, where parents rotate as classroom assistants, by modifying liabil-

BY GEORGE LIEBMANN

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ity rules and tax laws. In the Netherlands, Britain, and Ireland families each contribute a half-day per week to assist a professional day care worker whose costs are shared. This ensures the professional worker is not a law unto herself and also keeps parents in touch with their children, their children's friends, and each other.

◦ Return control of schools to the local community. Britain, Australia, and New Zealand give each school its own board composed of parents, teachers, and community members, which thereafter fills vacancies like a private school's board of trustees. This well-tested arrangement gives local boards authority over school rules, discipline of teachers, extracurricular activities, and growing shares of school budgets. They also have a voice in the hiring and replacement of principals. It encourages neighborhood schools more than regional mega-schools.

◦ Reform school contracts. The power of teachers' unions desperately needs to be curbed. Ending union control over teacher assignments, establishing merit pay, allowing extra pay in scarce disciplines such as science and math, allowing greater use of parent and community volunteers, and smoothing entry into the teaching force of housewives and persons from other occupations would greatly improve schools.

◦ Reform student discipline. Legal limitations on disciplining "emotionally disabled" students should be totally repealed. Drug testing at local discretion should be fostered through model protocols. (Such measures will not be carried out by a President or party subservient to the civil rights lobby and civil liberties unions.)

◦ Make high schools compete. While the neighborhood public school has real virtues if governed by the community, giving parents free choice of senior high schools would encourage top performance from schools. Federal Title I funds should be turned into vouchers, as should state and local funds for at least the last two years of high school. This would foster the growth of specialized public high schools, private schools, and schools for disruptive students.

George Liebmann, a Baltimore lawyer and TAE *contributing writer, is author of the forthcoming* Solving Problems Without Large Government.

• Use small tax credits to foster cooperative care among the elderly. Since most old people are well most of the time, many home-visiting and care functions which in this country are the responsibilities of bureaucracies are performed by the elderly for each other in Japan.

• The suburbs have a large stake in widespread private gun ownership, which provides a major deterrent to nighttime burglary, a crime virtually unknown here but very common in prosperous British neighborhoods. Rather than restricting legal gun ownership, firearm safety courses should be offered, and penalties on criminal gun use should be tightened.

◦ Reform the *Miranda* doctrine that excludes criminals' voluntary confessions. Better to video tape police questioning and allow judges to police the police.

• Keep volunteer fire and rescue companies free from union pressure for bureaucratization, with its higher costs and reduced efficiencies.

• Encourage newspaper reporting of all convictions and sentences—a cost-free way to use community shaming to encourage lawfulness. Welcome the return of law enforcement newspapers that flourished in the eighteenth century and publicized wanted persons, stolen goods, and criminal techniques.

• Increase transportation alternatives. Suburbanites lack adequate taxi and van and bus service because of restrictive licensing. Labor laws and other regulations currently make it almost impossible to privatize existing bus operations or create new ones. Reforms would permit "gypsy" cabs, van service sponsored by community associations, and new bus lines.

• Privatize municipal services. Inefficient governmental monopolies on municipal services raise costs and cause taxes to rise—a major suburban grievance. Numerous studies show that except for water and sewer, there are no significant economies of scale in government provision of municipal services. Privatization that avoids long-term grants of monopoly can produce large savings in street paving, trash collection, park maintenance, street and traffic light maintenance, janitorial and food services. In addition to private companies, these functions could devolve to condominium and community associations and business improvement districts.

• Provide parks and recreation more sensibly. Requiring huge residential lot sizes is an inefficient and inflexible way of introducing "green space." Parks can be established on flood plains and stream beds, which can be acquired at low cost because of limited development value. Creating foot and bicycle trail networks likewise improves livability.

In more general terms, Gore's suburban agenda should be attacked for its aim of multiplying federal aid dollars that come with strings attached. This sleight of hand avoids direct federal regulation of suburban jurisdictions while encouraging a one-size-fits-all homogeneity, sapping community initiative, and ignoring real local needs.

In fact, most existing federal domestic spending programs should be trimmed while we work for revenue sharing that would send more money back to the states. Some bold politician should imitate the German Christian Democrats and French Socialists by proposing the addition of a sentence to the Constitution's income-tax amendment that would mandate tax-sharing and prohibit strings-attached federal funding: "One-sixth of the proceeds of taxes imposed by authority of this amendment shall be distributed to states in proportion to their population; and one-sixtieth to primary and secondary schools, public and private, in proportion to their enrollment; no funds raised shall be granted to any state or local government or to any school upon conditions." That would encourage real federalism and local control.

The Democratic agenda for the nation's suburban majority seeks to aggrandize the power of bureaucracies, including not only government workers but also construction, public employee, and teachers' unions. A competing agenda would re-direct revenues and powers to schools, community associations, and localities, where the duties of parents and citizens are most readily combined, and where real-life soccer moms, volunteer dads, and good neighbors are most influential in government.

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A Muddied Mississippi Misadventure

By Pat Conroy

On June 6 the New York Times Magazine *published essays from Richard Ford and Stanley Crouch that sprang from the magazine's request they travel down the Mississippi together in memory of the trip portrayed in Mark Twain's* Huckleberry Finn. *Panicked by a boat malfunction, and too involved in themselves even to interact, they aborted the trip after one day. In a hopping mad letter to the editor excerpted here, novelist Pat Conroy (*Prince of Tides, The Great Santini, Beach Music*) attacks their articles.*

Since Richard Ford is from Mississippi, I thought he would respect the life-changing novel, *Huckleberry Finn.* I have not read it since college, but it still burns like a hill fire in my consciousness, its details fresh and yammy. Ford bops poor Huck on the head by declaring it "not a great novel." Then in his tortured style he takes us on an endless voyage into his nightmarish white-boy past to discover whether he is a racist.

Since Stanley Crouch is black I knew everything he was going to say, because, sadly, I live in a time when all black people seem to be speaking in the same voice. Black society itself seems to be undergoing some tragic nervous breakdown, unhelped by its embracing of the sleazy Clinton presidency. It cannot seem to right itself. It brings us to that embarrassing moment when O. J. Simpson was acquitted and most of black America seemed to surge up in ecstatic joy for the release of a man who I think almost decapitated his wife.

I'm worried about what did not happen on that boat between that white man and that black man. They did not even see each other once.

[*Huckleberry Finn*] is the least racist novel ever written. The great problem occurs because of the character—here it comes black America, I'm actually going to say it, run for cover—Nigger Jim. Yes, that is what he is called by Huck Finn, an ignorant and glorious white boy who travels down the Mississippi with a runaway slave he befriends and comes to love. It remains the greatest encounter between a black man and a white man in our nation's literature. Unlike Richard and Stanley, Jim and Huck saw each other, fully and bravely and magnificently.

NIGGER JIM IS THE GREATEST BLACK MAN EVER TO WALK THE PAGES OF AN AMERICAN NOVEL, AND HE WAS IMAGINED UP BY A WHITE MAN WHO WROTE OUT OF A SHEER IMMENSITY OF SPIRIT.

Nigger Jim is the greatest black man ever to walk the pages of an American novel, and he was imagined up by a white man who wrote out of a sheer immensity of spirit. I am deeply sorry Huck was not an ACLU member or [on] the English faculty at Yale, so he would not have called his friend such a demeaning name and black people could actually read this extraordinary book. But Nigger Jim is a better character than any in the books of Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Maya Angelou, or Richard Wright.

I have written the Twain estate asking if they would let me change the name of Huck's companion to African-American Jim; then that splendid book can be read by all Americans of good will in my sad and stupid country.

Racist, honkey, cracker, white boy, yeah, yeah. I taught Afro-American history in a South Carolina high school in 1968, including the autobiography of Malcolm X, when Richard Ford was brain-dead at Michigan State. I was early at the dance, and I did not hide my head in the sand about race relations.

Something is seriously amiss, not with just black people but with liberalism in America. Political correctness is the great infection that poisons liberalism. We cut off debate because we are always right, the other side always wrong. It is a form of Naziism, and we are seriously damaging our country. Yes, us, the good guys.

I have a stack of all [my] books. I add Richard Ford's books. Gosh, I need a woman. Toni Morrison. Wow, a two-fer, black and a woman. Got to have me an Asian. Who is that woman—Tan? Yeah, Amy Tan, another two-fer. My God, I've left out gay men. How about Alan Gurganus? No, Alan would never speak to me again. Try Michael Cunningham; I don't know him. For God sakes, I almost forgot the Jews. How about Roth? No, Cynthia Ozick, another two-fer. Wait. No lesbians. Dorothy Allison to the rescue. Hispanics, my God, I almost left off those noble people. Enter with honor, Oscar Hijuelos. Got to get me a black male—ha, the middle passage guy, Charlie, welcome aboard. O Lord, I left off the most godly group of all, the native Americans. Louise Erdrich, forgive me. All her books go into the tower of books.

Now across the table I lay a dog-eared paperback of *Huckleberry Finn.* Know what this looks like? Like a mighty redwood, staring down in all its majesty on a grove of dwarf pines.

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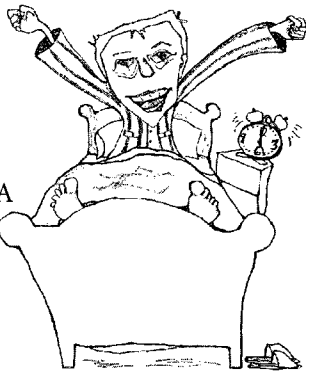
In Real Life

FIRST-PERSON AMERICA



JUST TELL 'EM TO WORK

By Blake Hurst

TARKIO, MISSOURI—"Diana," age 20, showed up this spring at our wholesale greenhouse here in northwest Missouri in search of a job. Cheryl, a former employee of ours, accompanied her. Diana had a hard luck story, was recommended by Cheryl, and was down to her last cent; so my wife Julie hired her.

She showed up for work for three days, missed a day, then needed her check on Saturday, one week earlier than normal. Julie told her to come and work on Saturday, and we would figure her paycheck at the end of the day. Saturday, she called up and couldn't come to work because she had had a headache on Friday. Monday, she was absent again, presumably still recovering from Friday's headache, but did send Cheryl to pick up her check. Tuesday, she missed work again. Ditto Wednesday. On Thursday, she finally put in an appearance. She had the misfortune to come into the office when Julie and I were both there, and had to undergo a tag-team attitude adjustment session. At noon, she left for good. We had made it clear that we would give her another chance, but she declined the offer.

You can't help but have sympathy for someone living in poverty. But my sympathy is tempered by the two or three phone calls I receive every morning from my workers who won't appear for work that day. Julie and I always hire more people than we need for just this reason. We're always astounded people won't help themselves. We don't pay high wages, but people can work as many hours as they want. Our few employees who are willing to work often put in 50 hours a week, and their paychecks reflect that. Diana was living with Cheryl and borrowing her car, had no money and no prospects, yet refused to show up at her job.

I've changed the way I handle these situations. I used to get mad and finally just fire people who wouldn't work. But now, I at least attempt to counsel them. It is the most difficult thing I do. In Diana's case, I tried hard to explain that the habits she cultivated in this, her first job, would determine how she fared in life. Working at Hurst Greenery is not the way to fame and fortune, but if you learn to show up and work hard, you have learned the most important lessons any job can teach. My blunter wife told Diana if she didn't start showing up for work on a more regular basis, she would be fired. Neither approach was successful.

Cheryl was just as young as Diana when we hired her a decade ago. Her initial performance was not good. We were patient and pointed out her productivity did not justify her salary. She improved and became a truly outstanding employee. The experience she gained here has served her well; she now works for a regional garden center chain and has already been promoted. No job is a dead-end job.

President Clinton took his poverty tour this summer, spreading promises of tax incentives and loan guarantees in his wake. An Associated Press story on the President's visit to East Saint Louis led with a description of George Moore , a young man visiting the local unemployment office. He'd lost his $670-a-week job as a dishwasher for oversleeping in the morning.

The article went on to talk about how Moore's lack of skills and education dim his prospects. But Mr. Moore had a job. And lack of education did not cause him to lose it. I have no idea how to solve the urban decay that plagues places like East Saint Louis, but I do know that Moore's prospects would improve dramatically if he bought an alarm clock.

The first step toward preparing workers in poverty-stricken areas for the "twenty-first-century" economy is to instill in them the habits that have served successful people well in the preceding 20 centuries—beginning with prompt and regular appearance at the job site. Our society as a whole suffers from the same failing I have as a supervisor: We find it hard to tell people like Diana what we expect, and harder still to forcefully point out their shortcomings when they fail to perform.

I serve on the board of a small insurance company here in Missouri. We are attempting to install a system of merit pay for our clerical and accounting staff, but it is extremely difficult. Managers are slow to write realistic performance appraisals. Like the school children in Lake Woebegone, everybody that works at our company is above average.

Our society holds no value higher than the refusal to judge others. From President to clerk, we refuse to hold people accountable for their performance, and we lack the courage to make the judgments people like Diana and George Moore so desperately need. When we shirk our responsibilities as managers and voters, we fail poor people in a more profound matter than any lack of government funding or shortage of tax credits and guaranteed loans.

So, we'll spend billions on government housing and high-tech training, drag *Fortune* 500 executives around the country urging them to build plants in places like East St. Louis, and give false hope to the folks who live in places like the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. But nobody will point out the obvious: What we lack is character, not government programs. Too many people still live in poverty in these prosperous times simply because nobody ever told them that they have to show up for work.

Blake Hurst, like a lot of farmers, has had a dry year.

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If Alan Greenspan Had Bitten the Bullet . . .

The last great Social Security "rescue" took place in 1983, when a blue-ribbon commission headed by Alan Greenspan recommended a combination of minor benefit trims and substantial tax increases to head off the serious trust fund shortfalls then looming. These changes were supposed to save the system for 75 years. Yet here we are a decade and a half later and Social Security projections are once again showing the program approaching bankruptcy.

Should the Greenspan Commission have proposed something bolder?

Back then, privatization of Social Security was not even on the radar screen, but suppose it had been. What if we could rewind, and start the Commission's work over again, and convince them to privatize at least a small part of Social Security? How would average workers have fared if the Greenspan commission had started us on the path to a system of personal savings?

These questions are much trickier to answer than you might think. A couple of examples will illustrate both the promise of privatization, and the perils of rushing to privatize without thinking through all of the costs and benefits.

First, let's explore the checkbook impact if there had been a partial privatization back in 1983. Let's imagine that just after the Greenspan Commission report was issued, persons turning 65 in 1998 and beyond began redirecting two percent of their income from the Social Security program into a private account, and that their employers matched that contribution, up to the established limits. Let's also assume that these contributions were invested in large-company stocks each year. And let's acknowledge that this redirection would lower the amount of money available to pay existing Social Security retirement benefits. Upon retirement, a hypothetical investor would receive normal Social Security payments (reduced by the same proportion that we reduced their tax contributions to the old system) plus the proceeds of an annuity purchased with the funds in the private account.

Would folks retiring today be better off? We ran the numbers for three fictional workers: Rusty, who earned the median male full-time income each year from 1983 to 1998; Penny, who earned the median female full-time income; and Mad Max, who earned the Social Security maximum taxed income each year. (In 1998, the maximum was $68,400). You will understand why Max is mad when you see the numbers.

For each earnings history, we used the Social Security calculator—available at the Social Security Administration's web site—to calculate benefits under the existing plan. To calculate the annuity payment, we took a sample of annuities available on the internet, and assumed that the individual bought an annuity with the average characteristics of our sample.

The accompanying table gives our results. It shows the monthly payment received by each of our workers under the current Social Security program, and what they would now be receiving if the Greenspaners had launched a partial privatization. All the workers would be significantly better off as well.

These calculations illustrate the case for privatization: More money goes to retirees under most plans. Imagine how much retirement incomes would increase if we privatized the *whole* system.

Advocacy pieces usually end here, but there is something else you need to know. This example ignores the debt owed existing retirees as we transition to the new system. And even short run "transition costs" can make a very big difference in the long run. A simple example illustrates the point.

Suppose that we live in a world that has one old person (the retiree) and one young person (the worker) alive each period, and that we have a Social Security system that takes $1 from the young person and gives it to the old person each year. The young person—who will be old next year—gives a dollar this year, but gets a dollar next year. (This is a gross simplification of the actual system. Most people today put in a dollar, but can expect to get far less than a dollar out.)

After a while, a reformer goes to the young person and points out what a horrible deal this system is. He is getting a zero percent return! The reformer suggests a privatization plan that allows the young person to put $0.90 in a private account today, and given the prevailing 11 percent interest rate, will give him a dollar tomorrow. By switching to a private plan, the young person's return goes from zero to 11 percent.

So society switches to a private plan. But immediately there is a problem. The

Recipient	Current Annual Benefit	2% Privatized Annual Benefit	Change
Rusty (median income male)	$15,024	$18,372	+22%
Penny (median income female)	11,856	13,800	+16%
Mad Max (maximum income)	17,088	22,092	+29%

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person who is old today, and expected to receive a dollar from the young person, doesn't get a dollar. Not being cold-hearted, our hypothetical government hatches a plan. They will issue government debt for $1, and give it to the old person who played under the previous rules. After that "transition," everyone will be in a plan that gives them an 11 percent return. So in the end, future generations are better off, right?

Not really. Each year, the government must pay the interest on the debt, which, given prevailing interest rates, is 11 percent of $1, or 11 cents. Since taxes are raised from young workers, they pay that amount. Under the old plan, the young workers put in a dollar, and then received a dollar back when they grew old. Under the new plan, they put 90 cents in their private account and pay 11 cents tax today, and still get just a dollar tomorrow!

Milton Friedman rightly points out that the $1 payment is not caused by the privatization—it is a liability that already exists, and privatization merely makes it visible. The unfunded liabilities of our current Social Security system are variously estimated at from $4 – 11 *trillion*. That breathtaking sum has nothing to do with privatization, it is the result of generations of overpromising by politicians. Just the same, our simple example illustrates the crucial point that you can't look at only the benefit-payments side of our retirement system and make a rational choice. We're also going to have to find a way to make Social Security's huge, looming liabilities go away, and that is going to be costly—perhaps costly enough to wash away many of the nice returns privatization offers.

Does that mean that privatization won't work? Not at all. But each of the costs and benefits of adopting any particular policy need to be weighed carefully. Privatization plans will vary between better and worse depending on things like the number of already-retired folks versus workers, the rate of return on investments, the interest rate the government has to pay on its bonds, and so forth.

We certainly would be closer to an ideal world today if the Greenspan Commission had inaugurated personal savings plans back in 1983. But even in our current jam, evidence from many countries suggests that the net gains from even partial privatization can be substantial. Harvard economist Martin Feldstein estimates, for example, that shifting to a privatized Social Security system could lead to an annual gain to the U.S. economy in the range of 1 – 2.5 percent of gross domestic product—a very large sum. The relatively favorable partial privatization experiences in Chile, Argentina, the United Kingdom, and Argentina studied in Feldstein's book *Privatizing Social Security* confirm the economic fruitfulness of personal-savings programs.

Moreover, partial privatization is likely to deliver other important benefits. Helping individuals to invest retirement funds gives them a stake in the private economy, and strengthens the connection between individual decisions and rewards. In addition, partial privatization would lessen the political risks of changing Social Security, where reforms are desperately overdue.

So America would be a better place today if Greenspan and company had bitten the bullet and proposed a Social Security privatization back then. But it still wouldn't be heaven.

Kevin Hassett & Glenn Hubbard are economists at the American Enterprise Institute.

Public Ignorance and Democracy

One of the best-kept secrets of political science is the repeatedly confirmed finding of abysmal public ignorance about everything political. Among the politically inattentive public, this means that opinions are easily manipulated by the media and politicians. Among the politically sophisticated elite, it means an overreliance on simplifying political ideology. At both levels, public ignorance raises serious questions about the coherence of democratic theory and of our understanding of everyday politics. A special issue of *Critical Review* reviews the evidence of public ignorance and opinion manipulation and explores whether there is any alternative to governance by an indifferent public or a dogmatic elite.

Richard Anderson: The Media in Mass Democracy

Jeffrey Friedman: Public Ignorance and Democratic Theory

Tom Hoffman: Defining Rationality Down

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Flashback

TO KNOW NOTHING OF WHAT HAPPENED
BEFORE YOU WERE BORN
IS TO REMAIN EVER A CHILD—*Cicero*

Corbis/Bettmann-UPI

The Eternal Flamethrower

The date: December 2, 1963. The place: the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. The event: the single most heroically curmudgeonly act in the history of Congress.

Only ten days have passed since President Kennedy was killed in Dallas. Washington is draped in crepe; Mary McGrory is predicting "We'll never laugh again"; Kennedy impressionist Vaughn Meader is frantically trying to learn the LBJ drawl.

The House, heavy with mourning, is quickly disposing of grim business: emergency appropriations for JFK's funeral expenses. Iowa Republican H.R. Gross rises. He is a wisp of a man, 5' 6" and 135 pounds, and he "wears loud neckties and a permanently worried expression," according to *Life*. His self-proclaimed mission is "to save this country from national bankruptcy."

Gross has already groused about the "around the clock" Secret Service protection for Widow Kennedy and her two children, but now he achieves the *ne plus ultra* of niggardliness: He protests that the American taxpayer should not be forced to foot the gas bill for the eternal flame at JFK's grave at Arlington National Cemetery.

Kennedy's obsequies and remembrance should be done "with restraint and in good taste," Gross observes, implying that the eternal flame meets neither standard. House Speaker John W. McCormack immediately shuts off debate. The bill passes by voice vote, and the legend of H. R. Gross grows larger.

The American taxpayer never had a more colorfully ornery friend than Iowa farmboy Harold Royce Gross, who looked as though he ought to be playing the puckered parsimonious accountant pouring cold water on Jimmy Stewart's dreams in a Frank Capra movie.

Gross was a Des Moines and Waterloo reporter and newscaster billed as "the man with the fastest tongue in radio." Among his employers was WHO, which had a slower-tongued baseball announcer named Reagan. But Dutch went west and Gross went east, after upsetting an incumbent Republican in a 1948 primary in which the antiwar Gross was vilified as a "radical leftist." He stalked congressional spendthrifts for 13 terms until his retirement in 1975.

HE PROTESTED THAT TAXPAYERS SHOULDN'T HAVE TO FOOT THE GAS BILL FOR THE TORCH AT JFK'S GRAVE.

As a freshman he voted against the Marshall Plan; a quarter-century later he opposed the bombing of Cambodia because it cost too much. In between he railed against the space program, foreign aid, congressional junkets, and every post office and bridge he could find. (Sometimes his targets merged: "Well, even if we don't get to the moon first, we'll be there first with foreign aid," he cracked.) His only regret was voting "present" instead of "no" on the Gulf of Tonkin resolution. Gross voted against the Eisenhower and Nixon administrations so often that Minority Leader Gerald Ford remarked, "There are three parties in the House: Democrats, Republicans, and H. R. Gross."

He detested ostentatious wealth ("the mink-coat set") and the celebrity-encrusted Kennedy administration in particular. He objected to the provision of military drivers for Frank Sinatra and Peter Lawford at the inaugural ball; he hooted that White House police were guarding Caroline's ponies "Macaroni" and "Spaghetti." (The latter was actually named Tex.)

H. R. Gross was the bane of House leaders, constantly objecting to unanimous-consent requests and greeting each new piece of legislation by blurting, "Just what's in this turkey?" or "How much will this boondoggle cost?" His choleric barbs could fill a book, though he would no doubt object to the expense of its publication. An overseas trip by a Truman underling was no mere junket but "a lush travel orgy." The Peace Corps was "a haven for draft dodgers." A proposed national aquarium was "a glorified fish pond."

Gross felt himself an utter alien in Washington. He was a Mason and an Elk and a husband to his wife Hazel for 58 years, until his death in 1987. (Hazel died in March 1999.) He avoided all parties and receptions and spent his evenings poring over government documents and watching wrestling on TV. When criticized for living in a cloister, he replied, "I just might take a trip one of these days, but it'll be at my own expense."

H. R. Gross was buried in Arlington National Cemetery, without an eternal flame. No monument commemorates the flinty Iowan. But perhaps a private subscription should be taken up so that the aphorism that adorned a wall of his congressional office might be chiseled in the chamber he once patrolled so vigilantly: "There is always free cheese in a mousetrap."

—Bill Kauffman

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FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

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Spring, 1999

To: Foundations and corporations

From: Ben Wattenberg

Re: Television opportunities available

Much valuable public policy research proceeds slowly, if at all, into the public debates and discussions that shape decision-making. Some research that does get into the mainstream is silly stuff. Mildly put, this situation diminishes the usefulness of research at a time when we need all the help we can get. Soon, Americans will be voting in an important election. As ever, surveys, sermons, spin and sound bites are at a premium. Even when candidates speak "on the issues" we get smoke.

Our company is deeply involved in trying to improve the transmission belt of public policy research and ideas into the intellectual and political marketplace, through public television. We bring to the public the best scholarship from right, left, center—and unclassifiable. I believe our panelists represent the best thinkers in America. Our programs are lively, interesting, civil, humorous—and provocative. Scholars speak American. No politicians, no journalists, no spinners, no food-fights.

We believe this kind of programming is of particular value to foundations, from every spot on the political spectrum, who often fund research that never sees the light of day. The PBS audience is larger by far than that of the cable channels. And decision-makers watch PBS.

We believe this kind of programming is of particular value to corporations. Decision-makers watch PBS.

Several themes unite all the projects.

1) They cover a wide variety of issues and ideas in the arena of public affairs.
2) While they are separate endeavors, underwriting credits can be arranged to appear on all three programs.
3) They are—typical of most all public broadcasting ventures—underfunded.

Can you help us in these endeavors?

Sincerely,

Ben Wattenberg

THINK TANK, a weekly discussion program, has produced more than 200 original programs with more than 300 different panelists. The program airs on stations across the country and on the PBS national satellite service. In Washington, where decision-makers live, it airs three times each week, twice on WETA and on WHUT (the Howard University channel.) A fourth play in is likely later this year.

TRENDS, is an annual prime time PBS documentary special. The 1999 program, airing in November, is "The Stockholder Society." It explores the explosion in pensions—401-ks, IRAs, Keoghs, Roths, ESOPs, options—which have transformed the nature of being old in America, and transformed America, socially, economically, politically and ideologically.

THE FIRST MEASURED CENTURY, a three-hour documentary program, scheduled to air in 2000, in "core feed" prime time. It is a rich, colorful, visual, fast-moving narrative telling the story of this American century with a focus on data, not anecdote. It's been 100 years since the advent of systematic modern social and economic measurement. But most Americans still learn history as the story of Presidents, politics and personalities. FMC lets us know what happened to people.

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Oliver Stone Throws a Hail Mary

You're a director and a studio gives you $50 million for a picture. The movie you make becomes the rallying cry for national politicians criticizing Hollywood excesses, lands you and the studio in court for possibly inciting a brutal crime spree, and barely breaks even at the box office.

Naturally, executives are wary about your next project. It's about one of the most unpopular political leaders of the century. It tanks, bringing in less than half of what it cost to make.

Your next outing seems promising because it has an all-star cast. But it barely earns $7 million.

If you have this financial track record in the entertainment capital of Las Vegas you'll end up with your legs broken. But in Hollywood it earned director Oliver Stone the chance to try to redeem himself by making a picture about an all-American pastime: professional football.

No, the man who made *JFK* hasn't uncovered the identity of a new grassy knoll shooter in one of Tom Landry's old playbooks. He just knows box office when he sees it. So he's assembled Al Pacino, Cameron Diaz, Charlton Heston, Dennis Quaid, and LL Cool J for *Any Given Sunday*, a Christmas release from Warner Bros. Real-life football legends Johnny Unitas, Dick Butkus, and Jim Brown are also along for Stone's $55 million paean to the gridiron.

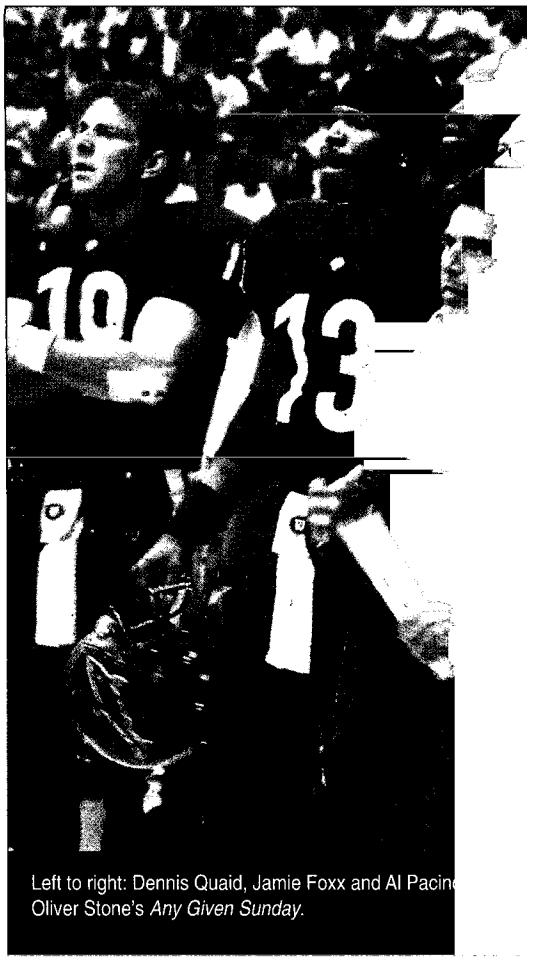
Pacino plays Miami Sharks coach Tony D'Amato. "I've given up everything I have to be on that sideline every Sunday," he says. Riveting scenes invoke the men who made the game, amidst montages of the sport in all its splendor. In an early draft of the script, players are depicted as "heroic and shimmering."

The action projected on 150-ft. screens will no doubt be visceral and "in your face"—the OIiver Stone trademark. Class war, another Stone cliche, will also be a prominent theme. Diaz plays the team owner—vicious, and out for the bottom line. One black player complains that for every Barry Sanders-like hero "there are a hundred niggers you never heard of, and when they get too slow, the game tosses them back on the street...and the game keeps on going." Get the idea?

Oliver Stone's core message is that "Football isn't about honor or sport; it's really about money." This may resonate in our era where there's often more hype about the Super Bowl commercials than the game itself. But debunking America's favorite sport isn't going to be easy. *GQ* just had Doug Flutie, Terrell Davis, and Bill Parcells on its cover under the headline "Why We Love Football." A film about the beloved Redskins replacement team of the '80s is in the works. And a Vince Lombardi biography by writer David Maraniss is one of the most eagerly anticipated books of the fall, with a splashy excerpt appearing in *Vanity Fair*.

Stone will surely do football as it has never been done before. Imagine *North Dallas Forty* with an added dose of painkillers, race conflicts, heartless businessmen, and the *F* word thrown in for good measure. That's just the kind of over-the-top embellishment that has always characterized Stone.

It's also what landed Stone and his Time Warner bosses in court recently. A vicious crime rampage carried out by a Louisiana couple after they repeatedly watched Stone's *Natural Born Killers* now has the director playing defense.



Left to right: Dennis Quaid, Jamie Foxx and Al Pacin
Oliver Stone's *Any Given Sunday*.

© 1999 By Warner Bros.

The victims say Stone's picture caused the attack, and have filed a civil suit that the U.S. Supreme Court has refused to stop. Stone himself told the *New York Times* their complaint isn't so far-fetched: "The most pacifistic people in the world said they came out of this movie and wanted to kill somebody." Stone's deposition is scheduled for this fall.

As this column was going to press, it seemed as though the director was spending more time in court than even his *JFK* hero Jim Garrison. Stone recently plea-bargained DUI and drug charges from last summer, and is now on probation and in a drug rehab program.

But for this Hollywood fixture, the latest troubles are all re-runs. Stone's drug arrest record, for instance, dates back to 1969, when he was stopped by authorities near San Diego after a little jaunt to Mexico. "I got busted at the border carrying two ounces of my own weed," he said.

Talk about an intentional foul.

—John Meroney

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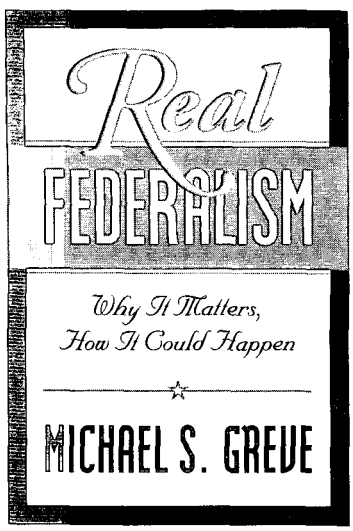

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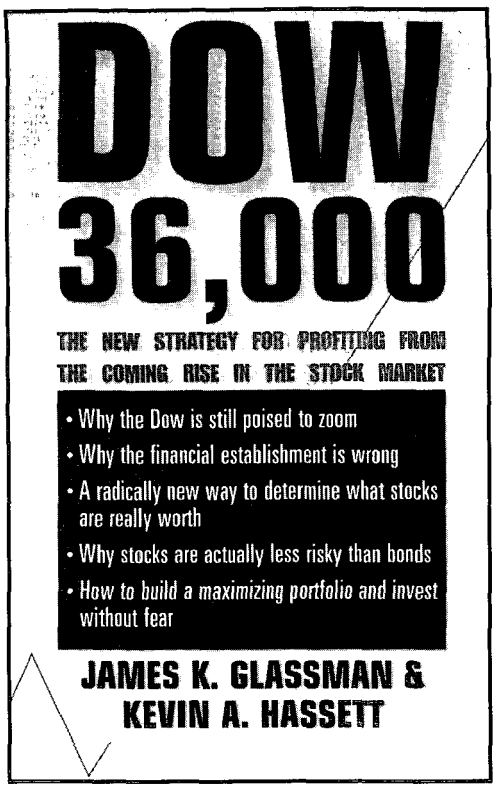

(for a sneak preview, see pp. 18–20)

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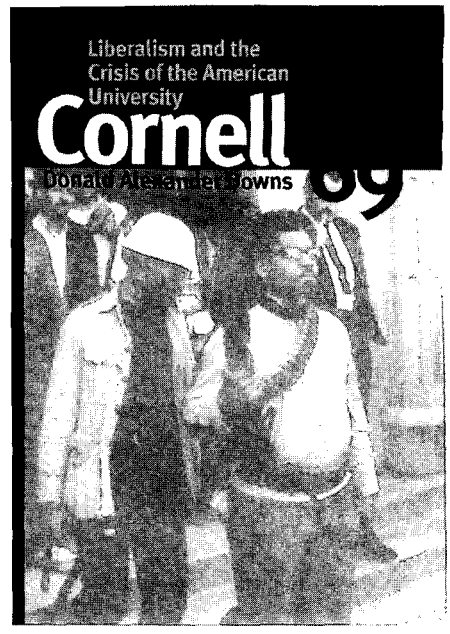
BookTalk



THE UGLY SHADOW OF '69

By Ying Ma

Cornell '69: Liberalism and the Crisis of the American University
By Donald Alexander Downs
Cornell University Press, 359 pages, $35

"The *Review*, the *Review* is on fire. We don't need no water.... Let the motherf_ er burn!" a black student rapped as he torched stolen copies of the conservative *Cornell Review* in a garbage can. Some 200 other blacks surrounded him, cheering and shouting obscenities. As the former president (and a board member) of the *Review*, I attempted to address the crowd but was prevented by two protesters who threw the garbage can of newspaper embers at me. At this illegal takeover of a major street intersection at Cornell University in April 1997, one of the college deans stood by silently.

On April 19, 1969, about 80 members of Cornell's African-American Society took over the university's student center, Willard Straight Hall. They evicted the custodial staff and parents staying there for Parents Weekend. Under orders from Cornell president James A. Perkins, campus security did not impede or arrest the militants. The next day the students, having secured amnesty from frightened administrators, emerged from the building triumphantly, brandishing rifles, wearing bandoleers, and making black power salutes.

The Willard Straight takeover is described in great detail in Donald Alexander Downs' *Cornell '69: Liberalism and the Crisis of the American University*. This dramatic event marked the beginning of a still open era in which the Cornell administration would cower over and over again before threats from ethnic minorities. The militants who looted and burned the *Cornell Review* in 1997 drew from their predecessors in '69 both revolutionary inspiration and an expectation that the university would do nothing to curb their actions.

In the late 1960s, president Perkins (1963-69) recruited blacks from inner-city areas with little attention to their academic qualifications, in order to force the pace of racial integration at Cornell. Feeling frustrated by academic stresses and alienated in rural white Ithaca, many blacks soon adopted the militant racial rhetoric of the day, such as Stokely Carmichael's idea that "before a group can enter open society, it must close ranks."

With the students justifying their militancy in the name of racial justice, the university chose to appease rather than discipline them. When a black female student was suspended for conflicts with white neighbors, the African-American Society (AAS) complained that black culture was endangered, and was granted a separate dorm for black women. When a visiting lecturer taught that the stability necessary for economic prosperity was missing in black ghetto areas, black students took over the economics department, protesting "institutional racism." The university agreed to give them a new lecturer. When two militants grabbed and shook Perkins by the collar at a symposium on South Africa, they were not punished. Finally, when six black students threatened Perkins with a knife, demanding an independent black college, the university's judicial board convicted and suspended them. The AAS responded with the Straight Takeover.

In scrambling to resolve the crisis, the Cornell administration agreed to pardon all the black students involved. The faculty that had originally voted that their gross violations of law and order must be punished soon reversed itself, cowed by death threats and pressure from left-wing professors and liberal students. At the end of the crisis, president Perkins would resign, and prominent scholars like Walter Berns, Allan Bloom, Allan Sindler, and Thomas Sowell would depart Cornell in disgust.

By the time I reached Cornell in 1993, the rule of law and academic freedom had been so consistently ignored that militant minorities routinely used the language of violence. Hispanic students, for instance, took over the central administrative building in November 1993 and injured a few police officers while demanding a Latino curriculum and separate living center. The university gave it to them. During the spring of 1995, when Cornell president Hunter Rawlings (1994-present) timidly suggested that all students could benefit from racially integrated living their freshmen year, campus minorities staged mass rallies on a "Day of Outrage." An innocent bus driver was punched in the face by a black protester, and Rawlings responded by rescinding his integration proposal.

Come April 1997, when black students erupted over an unflattering ebonics parody in the *Cornell Review*, they automatically resorted to disrupting traffic, de-

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stroying private property, and threatening the university with another building takeover. Reminiscent of the manhandling of Perkins in '69, trustee Thomas Jones had his microphone snatched away at a rally and was denounced as an "Uncle Tom" by rowdy protesters who objected to his interview with the *Cornell Review*. (Incidently, Jones had led the 1969 takeover but had since apologized to Perkins and was appointed to the Cornell board in the 1990s.)

In 1997 just as in '69, the adults with the duty to guide the students actually encouraged or condoned the illegal protests. Professors of the African Studies Center joined in shouting obscenities at me as I attempted to reason with angry black students. President Rawlings drooped his head before minority protesters and said not one word about respecting freedom of speech or keeping protests within legal boundaries. Dean of Students John Ford, when challenged by students to stop the theft and arson, snapped, "I do not wish to talk right now."

Had Cornell not capitulated to radicalism in 1969 the successive blatant violations of law and freedom since then might not have occurred at all. Yet in those thirty years the Cornell administration hasn't once mustered the courage to argue that the academic freedom of those who enrage minority thugs is worth protecting. The ugly shadow of Cornell '69 sadly lingers on.

Ying Ma is a graduate of Cornell University. She currently works in Hong Kong.

REAL MEN DON'T SELL SOFTWARE

By David Boaz

In Praise of Hard Industries
By Eamonn Fingleton
Houghton Mifflin, 273 pages, $26

The jacket blurb for this book tells us that the author's "most recent book, *Blindside: Why Japan Is Still on Track to Overtake the U.S. by the Year 2000*, was praised by John Kenneth Galbraith, James Fallows, and Bill Clinton, and was named one of the ten best business books of 1995 by *Business Week*." How many warning signs can you count in that sentence?

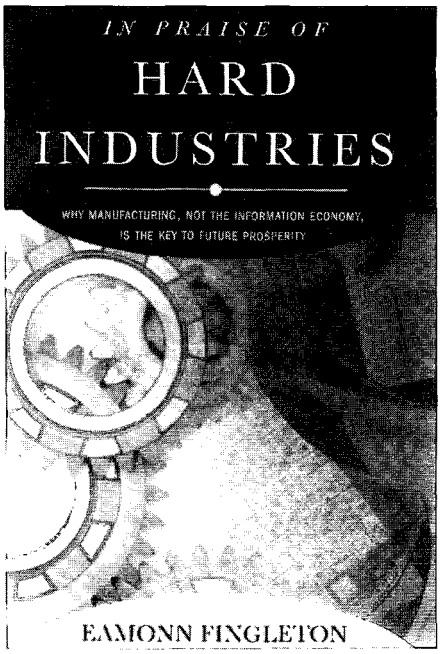
Strange enough that the author and his publisher would mention such a book in trying to sell the same author's new book. Stranger still, Eamonn Fingleton still believes that Japan's economy will somehow overtake ours by 2000.

Fingleton makes the legitimate point that Japan is not in depression. The Japanese own more cars and take more vacations than they did a decade ago. His claim that the Japanese "now receive as much as 50 percent more [living] space for their money as a decade ago" might be tempered by the realization that this is because Japanese real estate prices have crashed (hardly a good thing for homeowners). It's true new buyers now pay less for their domiciles, but they still have much less living space than Americans. As for Japan's overtaking the United States, our real GDP grew by 3.0 percent a year from 1990 to 1998, Japan's by 1.2 percent.

Fingleton's main point is summed up in his subtitle, "Why Manufacturing, Not the Information Economy, Is the Key to Future Prosperity." But after reading the book, a line from the '80s comes to mind: Where's the beef? Fingleton presents lots of interesting facts about manufacturing, and makes it clear he doesn't like "cyberspace and Tinseltown," but he never convinces a skeptical reader to agree.

In fact, his argument fails on its own terms. He complains that Japan, Germany, Switzerland, and our other "competitors" are besting us in manufacturing. How? Through the use of subsidies, protectionism, and state direction of capital investment. So naturally his plan for the United States is to use tax incentives, a tax on financial transactions, financial regulation, more corporate regulation, and tariffs in order to force-feed U.S. manufacturing.

But if we've learned anything about economics from Adam Smith to the collapse of crony capitalism in East Asia it is that markets do a more efficient job than regulators of guiding scarce resources to their most valuable uses. Besides, American manufacturing is not in the depressed state that Fingleton would have us believe. Although U.S. manufacturing employment has fallen slightly, manufacturing as



a percentage of U.S. GDP has *risen* during the 1990s. In fact, our industrial production index is up 32 percent since 1992, while Japan's is down 2.4 percent. Production of "motor vehicles and parts" is up about 50 percent since 1992. We're making more stuff with fewer workers, which is the very definition of economic growth.

Maybe the real point of this book is found not in the subtitle but in the title: *In Praise of Hard Industries*. Real men make stuff, Fingleton hints, they don't shuffle paper, they don't sell services. This is a common theme of industrial policy advocates from Robert Reich and Felix Rohatyn to Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison: Old basic industries like steel, automobiles, oil, and rubber make a country great. Software and services are, well, soft.

Fingleton just doesn't seem to understand economics. He thinks imports are bad, one of the most fundamental economic errors. He complains that we rely on imports for nearly one-third of our manufactured goods. But in fact imports are great; exports are the cost we have to pay to get imports. The rising levels of international trade reflect a greater worldwide specialization of labor, putting comparative advantage to work for more and more people.

Fingleton's obsessed with trade deficits. They seem more real to him than a rising standard of living. He triumphantly notes that Japan has run huge current account surpluses during

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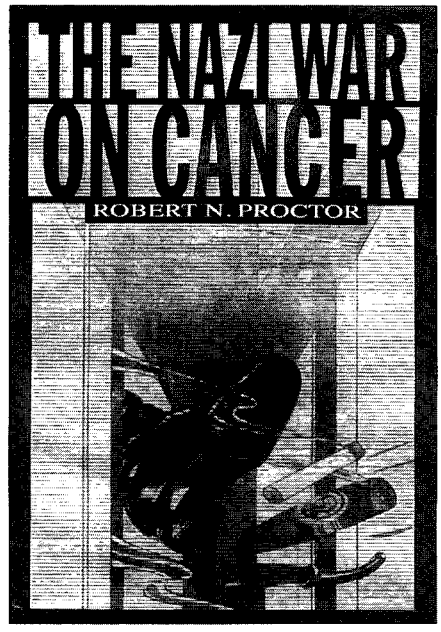
the 1990s (a lot of good it did them), and complains that software, financial services, and other fashionable industries are not eliminating "the perennially troubled American balance of payments"—as if the Balance of Payments were a real entity. Fully 223 years ago Adam Smith wrote that "nothing can be more absurd than this whole doctrine of the balance of trade," and researchers continue to prove his point today.

In a book that cites as authorities cranks ranging from Germaine Greer to Ralph Nader to Pat Buchanan, it's no surprise to run across crank ideas from the mundane—like the Holy Grail of renewable energy—to the truly novel:

- "The key faculty [in software programming] is merely an excellent short-term memory—the ability, for instance to remember long strings of numbers. . . . Microsoft's Bill Gates himself exemplifies in high degree the sort of mind that succeeds in the software industry. He reportedly can recall the telephone extension numbers and car license plate numbers of countless Microsoft employees."
- "The managerial challenge of running a software company is not nearly so daunting as is generally imagined."
- Sweden is in dire straits because "Swedish economic policy making has been increasingly shaped by laissez-faire thinking."
- And my favorite: The reason that most economists reject Fingleton's views is that American "college administrators increasingly select for advancement those economics scholars whose views are most likely to please the Bank of Sweden [which awards the Nobel Prize in economics] and its right-leaning nominating committees."

Read this book for some interesting reporting on high-tech manufacturing. But remember the immortal (though perhaps apocryphal) advice of Michael Boskin that it really doesn't matter whether you make computer chips or potato chips; it's how much money you generate in doing so that counts. Only a very silly macho man measures the worth of a product—or an economy—by weight.

David Boaz is executive vice president of the Cato Institute and author of Libertarianism: A Primer.



SOCIAL ENGINEERING WITH THE NAZIS

By Peter Augustine Lawler

The Nazi War on Cancer
By Robert N. Proctor
Princeton University Press, 380 pages, $29.95

Robert Proctor seems astounded that medical science and public health efforts flourished in Nazi Germany. In fact, however, public health controls proved quite compatible with fascist political goals.

The Nazi war against cancer was singularly aggressive. It included efforts to eradicate the use of asbestos, tobacco, carcinogenic pesticides, and food dyes. Good diet was promoted almost as aggressively. Soybeans became Nazi beans, and bakers were required to bake whole-grain bread. The anti-smoking campaign was imaginative and intensive, if not particularly successful in changing personal habits.

In addition to efforts to curtail smoking and improve diet, mass screenings were aimed at early cancer detection, and occupational carcinogens were discovered and combated. Meticulous German scientists made connections–such as the one between smoking and lung cancer–that were not accepted in America until almost two decades later. Take out the racist dimension, and it seems that American public health policies have fully caught up with the Nazis only in the last 20 years.

Proctor labors over many reasons for this Nazi concern for personal health, but one overwhelms the others. A Hitler Youth manual proclaimed, "Nutrition is not a private matter!" Each citizen had a duty to be healthy, because the citizen existed for the state. His or her body was emphatically not personal property. So the Nazi interest in health was in the service of maximizing performance at work, at sport, and on the battlefield. Germans should be lean, high-performing machines. They should be productive on the job, prolific breeders of new citizens, world-class athletes, and virile soldiers. Reducing the incidence of debilitating maladies such as cancer and heart disease served those political goals. What astonishes Proctor makes perfect sense to a political philosopher: The purposes of the regime always largely determine the purposes to which science is employed.

The Nazis were interested in collective goals, not personal flourishing. They aspired for workers to remain healthy and productive until retirement, and then die, because the elderly are a drain on the state. The regime did not encourage personal desires to avoid death; it was the state or *Volk* that the Nazis aimed to make immortal. Certain Nazi leaders, such as Hitler, were obsessed almost to the point of lunacy with their own well-being, but those were personal quirks, not policies for the people.

Nazism, Proctor properly notes, was a curious mixture of technocratic efficiency with naturalist romanticism. The aim of perfecting the race was a version of social engineering. Everything malformed and disordered about human existence was to be eliminated. For Nazis the war against the Jews was analogous to the war against cancer, although one was cruel and insane and the other mostly beneficial and reasonable.

But it was not only Jews who were to be eliminated. The killing of the mentally

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and physically ill was presented as perfectly reasonable, not murder at all. What is most disturbing is that this killing, except for its racism, really does fit the political goal of mental and physical perfection. Nazism was a vast hygienic experiment, Proctor observes, designed to bring about utopia.

Proctor's fear of political incorrectness prevents him from using this Nazi experiment to reflect on American medical science and health policy today. Are there tyrannical implications to the current view that human beings have a duty not to smoke? Our situation may be different because it is built on a cult of narcissism and personal longevity. Yet we are coming to expect the government to protect us from death, and that is producing a public moralism almost as severe in certain respects as that of the Nazis.

Proctor opposes those who link Nazism with abortion, euthanasia, physician-assisted suicide, medical rationing, and other emerging policies that favor the "quality of life" over life itself. But these policies, which aim to rationalize death, could be usefully illuminated by being compared to the Nazi example. Are we beginning to believe the useless and unproductive and inconveniently conceived have a duty to die? Abortion and euthanasia, our pro-choicers claim, close off lives that are unwanted or otherwise not worth living.

This "quality of life" trend seems likely to triumph over the obsession with avoiding death altogether. We know we must die, and so we really want the experts to make death as comfortable or thoughtless as possible. We, like the Nazis, are cloaking many of these decisions in medical euphemisms. Our view of medical science and public health, like theirs, is a mixture of authentic science and romanticism.

For the Nazis, this romanticism came from the Right. For us, it comes from the Left.

Peter Augustine Lawler, a professor of government at Berry College, is the author of Postmodernism Rightly Understood: the Return to Realism in American Thought.

SHE'S NO KISSINGER

By Paul Gottfried

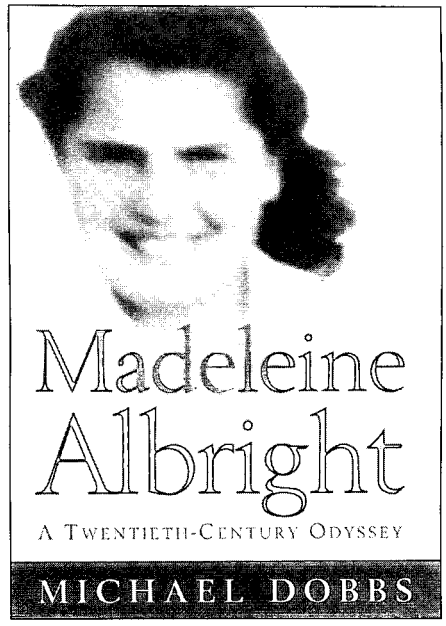
Madeleine Albright
By Michael Dobbs
Henry Holt, 480 pages, $27.50

Michael Dobbs' biography of the current Secretary of State is less a political study than an investigation into Madeleine Albright's personal life. A generally dispassionate reporter for the *Washington Post*, Dobbs uncovered Albright's Jewish origins soon after her appointment as Secretary of State in December 1996. At the time, Albright claimed she had grown up as a Czech Catholic, with only a vague sense of her Jewishness, and that neither her father Josef Korbel nor her mother Mandula (*née* Spiegel) had revealed her genealogy to her.

There are numerous reasons to be skeptical of this claim; for example, the mounting evidence in the form of plainly Jewish relatives to which the young Madeleine had been exposed, the names and appearances of the entire family (which are those of Central European Jews), and the political problem that might have been caused by the revelation, namely the charge that Clinton was putting more Jews into his Cabinet to strengthen his Jewish Democratic base.

Nonetheless, Dobbs forced the issue by publishing revelations that were incorporated into the biography. He tries to show how it was possible, but not likely, that Albright only became fully aware of her Jewish background in her late fifties. Although not entirely convincing even for him, Dobbs' arguments command respect. He points out that assimilated Jews in the old Austro-Hungarian empire, like Albright's grandparents, felt no reason to advertise their Jewishness. Such people felt alienated from the ghetto life prevalent among Eastern European Jews, and at the same time hoped to give no offense to Christians by behaving as anti-Semites depicted economically ascending Jews.

From my knowledge of Albright's antecedents (which are similar to my own), it seems that her family was spread over three linguistic and national regions, German, Hungarian, and Czech. Her immediate family (which presumably was



German speaking) fitted themselves into the post-World War I Czech state, in which her father distinguished himself as a diplomat. Her parents escaped to London before World War II as Czech dignitaries, not as Jewish refugees. Madeleine subsequently married into an Episcopalian socialite family and pursued a bluestocking existence in Georgetown.

Dobbs suggests Albright probably knew about multiple Jewish relatives, including her American cousin Harry Guggenheim, aviation pioneer and scion of a prominent German Jewish family. And though Madeleine was told the Nazis had killed family members as Czech patriots or political opponents, the reason for their deaths should have been clear to her well before the 1990s. In 1967 she met a Czech Jew, Petr Novak, in Prague; he allegedly discussed with his visitor her family's fate in wartime Czechoslovakia. Novak, it should be noted, was her mother's cousin.

It is incomprehensible why Albright took pains to hide her background. Her behavior and that of her parents remain an enigma, even after reading Dobbs' heroic attempt to make sense of it.

Though Dobbs depicts his subject as an "idealist," a crusading moralist in international affairs, the figure that emerges from his book is unrelievedly dull. No moving speeches or memorable *bons mots* grace her diplomatic career. Albright's crowning achievements are seen as her "loyalty to the Democratic

continued on page 82

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off The Shelf

A REGULAR REVIEW OF CLASSIC, OVER-LOOKED, NEWLY RELEVANT, OR OTHERWISE DESERVING OLDER BOOKS

THE BEAUTY OF AN ORDINARY CITY BLOCK

By Philip Langdon

The Death and Life of Great American Cities
By Jane Jacobs, 1961

When I went off to college in 1965, I had no idea a thick tan paperback I'd recently read would be close by my desk 34 years later, accompanied by a more recent printing because my first copy suffered so much use the pages started falling out.

Jane Jacobs' *Death and Life of Great American Cities* has had phenomenal staying power. Published in 1961 when the tragedies of urban renewal were unfolding daily, Jacobs' mighty challenge to the big-project mentality is still a riveting guide to the way traditional cities work. Its 458 pages of small, dense type continue to generate excitement among first-time readers and long-time urban students alike.

Death and Life is an attack on the hubris of governments (or other institutions) that insist on creating large, all-new, homogeneous developments, rather than nurturing a mixture of buildings of differing ages containing differing uses and accommodating differing kinds of people. Diverse, close-grained settings that allow room for the inexpensive and the experimental are critical to a vigorous urban civilization, she argues. Jacobs detests the "separation of uses" doctrine at the core of so many modern zoning and urban planning codes. She knows mixed-use neighborhoods are often livelier, safer, and better equipped to cope with economic ups and downs. For this and other good reasons, such as her championing of wide sidewalks, narrow streets, short blocks, and plenty of pedestrian connections, Jacobs is the patron saint of today's New Urbanists.

Like her fellow Pennsylvanian-turned-New Yorker, the recently deceased William H. Whyte, Jacobs built her reputation on patient observation of patterns in urban dwellers' behavior. Her vignette of the "intricate sidewalk ballet" of Hudson Street—the ways in which a broad assortment of people used the sidewalks in her part of Greenwich Village–is an eloquent explanation of how a small piece of public terrain can minister to practically every human need.

From Jacobs came the memorable phrase "eyes on the street," the idea that safety grows not from cops or bright street lights but from settings where other people are about at all hours, their natural watchfulness continually discouraging criminal activity. She brought respect to everyday enterprises like little grocery stores, noting that their owners help maintain public order. Whereas some urban planners had regarded expansive parks and grand civic complexes as the keys to urban regeneration, the iconoclastic writer from Scranton emphasized that shops, cafés, and other hangouts are crucial sources of urban vitality and enjoyment—an insight now widely embraced.

In the 1920s and '30s, the Garden City movement had called for comprehensively planned developments containing open space, schools, and good housing away from heavily trafficked streets. *Death and Life* is a fierce attack on such neat community plans, which Jacobs saw as allowing little room for the economic and social dynamism of a thriving city. In Jacobs' view, a tidy, picture-perfect community is an illusory goal because an energetic society constantly transforms its economy and environment.

Despite her affectionate portrayal of the jumbled neighborhoods through which urban planner Robert Moses wanted to blast big projects, Jacobs is refreshingly free of nostalgic pieties. She notes that the great advantage of cities is that they contain many people you can encounter rewardingly in the street, the café, and other public places, though you wouldn't want to invite them into your home. She is appreciative but never mushy.

Jacobs' book has lasted so well for at least two other reasons. One, brought to my attention by New Urbanist architect Patrick Pinnell, is that *Death and Life* is almost the last expression of optimism about Americans' city-making abilities before the onset of a long period of gloom about supposedly intractable racial and socioeconomic problems. Jacobs focused on what works for a broad range of people and did not put a minority-group or redistributionist agenda above the needs of the city as a civilization.

Another reason her book endures is Jacobs' assiduous avoidance of period clichés. Jacobs described what was in front of her eyes in straightforward language, posing questions that any bright, curious urbanite might ask. In recognition of her influence, *Ideas That Matter: The Worlds of Jane Jacobs*, was published in 1977 by The Ginger Press in Owen Sound, Ontario. It gathers a fascinating array of articles, speeches, and other materials by or about Jacobs.

Jacobs, 83, now lives in Toronto. She has written six more books, and is working on a seventh about cities and ecology. But this remains her masterwork, still in print. It has never gone stale.

TAE *contributing editor Philip Langdon is author of* A Better Place to Live: Reshaping the American Suburb.

BOOK TALK continued from page 81

Party," as witnessed by her fund-raising efforts for Bill Clinton, and her willingness to utter obligatory platitudes to human rights.

Next to another Central European Jew who occupied her office a couple decades ago, embodying dignified eloquence, Albright is truly a dud. Henry Adams once suggested that the decline in the quality of American presidents from Washington to Grant disproved the theory of human progress. The sharp intellectual dimunition among Secretaries of State, from Kissinger to Albright, perhaps does so even more thoroughly.

Professor Paul Gottfried's latest book is After Liberalism.

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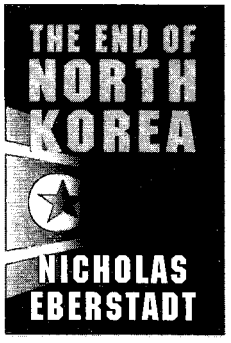

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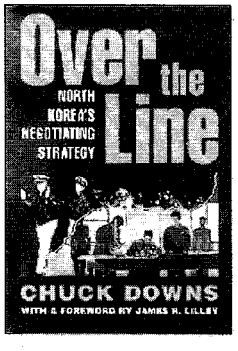

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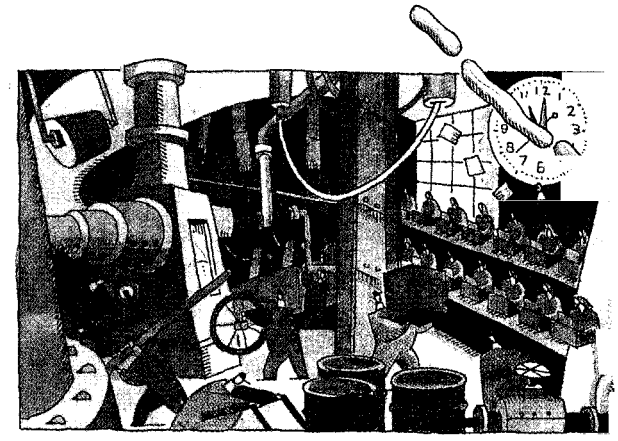

SUMMARIES OF IMPORTANT NEW RESEARCH FROM THE NATION'S UNIVERSITIES, THINK TANKS, AND INVESTIGATIVE PUBLICATIONS

POLITICS

The Culture Tussle

Jeremy Rabkin, "The Culture War That Isn't," in *Policy Review* (August-September 1999), Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Avenue N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002.

A rising number of social conservative leaders seem unwilling to continue to battle in politics. In February, conservative activist Paul Weyrich released a letter saying, "If there really were a moral majority out there, Bill Clinton would have been driven out of office months ago." He called on Christians to "look at what we can do to separate ourselves from this hostile culture."

Two recent books reinforce Weyrich's theme. In *Blinded by Might*, columnist Cal Thomas and pastor Ed Dobson call on their fellow evangelicals to retreat from politics and model the Gospel by being good moral examples to their neighbors. Political scientist Kenneth Craycraft, in *The American Myth of Religious Freedom*, argues that history shows the best way for his fellow Catholics to pursue their faith is to abandon politics entirely.

Rabkin, a Cornell political scientist, insists these separationists go too far: Devout Christians and Jews ought to be involved in politics, without assuming they are at war with anyone. "Real culture war," he argues, "is remote from American experience."

"Culture war" derives from the German *Kulturkampf*, a movement by Otto von Bismarck in the 1870s to seize Catholic institutions and place them under state control. No comparable movement exists in today's America. If there's a "culture war," Rabkin asks, who is the commander of the secular army? Some "progressives," for example, rally around the banner of science, but others side with radical feminists who condemn science as a tool of the patriarchy.

Rabkin believes some social conservatives overlook the many victories they've won in the 1990s. For example, Clinton came into office championing homosexuality in the military, but in 1996 he signed the Defense of Marriage Act drafted to block gay marriage. During the impeachment debate, President Clinton's defenders at least gave lip service to morality by quickly conceding that his liaison with Monica Lewinsky was immoral. By contrast, few Frenchmen cared when longtime French President Francois Mitterand was revealed to be a Nazi collaborator.

"It remains dangerous and self-defeating for religious conservatives to see popular culture as simply an arena for politics and then to see politics in terms of a single, overriding culture war," Rabkin concludes.

ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

Let Banks Fail

Charles W. Calomiris, "Runs on Banks and the Lessons of the Great Depression," in *Regulation* (No. 1, 1999), Cato Institute, 1000 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

According to conventional wisdom, sound banks routinely failed during the Great Depression, forcing the federal government to take drastic action to protect depositors. Actually, contends Charles Calomiris of the American Enterprise Institute, Depression-era savers kept their funds in sound banks and withdrew money from shaky ones, and this threat of withdrawal was "an effective means of depositor discipline."

During the Depression, investors tended to be wary of banks that had, for example, loaned too much money to farmers (who often couldn't repay their loans after crop prices collapsed). But investors weren't skittish about all banks; they withdrew money from ones displaying warning signs, such as cutting their dividends or trying to get rid of bad loans.

And when bank runs occurred, most were quickly solved. In the most important panic, which occurred in Chicago in 1932, larger banks pooled their resources together to help small but healthy banks out.

Meanwhile, the federal deposit insurance programs that are today thought to be the solution to bank runs actually encourage insolvency, by indirectly encouraging banks to take bad risks. "Deposit insurance itself is largely to blame for the vulnerability of banking systems within the United States and around the world," Calomiris argues.

Why Trade Works

Stephen S. Golub, *Labor Costs and International Trade*. AEI Press, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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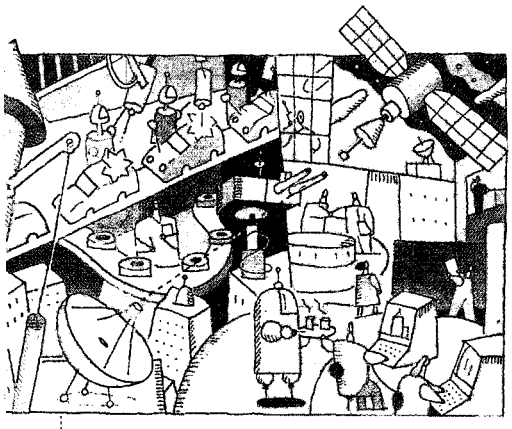

Foes of free trade argue that, without protectionist barriers, jobs would inevitably flow from rich countries to poor ones: Why would a firm pay an American worker $15 an hour when it can hire an Asian for $1.50 an hour or less? But Stephen Golub, a Swarthmore College economist, argues that even with free trade, many factors keep manufacturing jobs in Europe and America.

Most critics, Golub notes, ignore the differences in productivity between workers in various countries. Malaysians earn, on average, about one-tenth what Americans do, but Malaysians are also about one-tenth as productive. So cheaper wages are no reason for an American manufacturer to shift jobs to Malaysia, because Malaysian labor offers no net gain to most investors.

If manufacturing jobs were moving from rich countries to poor ones, the developing nations would have substantial trade surpluses with the developed ones. Yet nearly all developed countries sell more goods to Third World nations than they buy from them. In 1995 Germany had the world's highest average wages; it sold 4.2 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) in manufactured goods to the Third World and bought 3.1 percent, resulting in a trade surplus of 1 percent of GDP. America, by contrast, did have a trade deficit in manufactured products, but at 1.4 percent of our GDP it was relatively small.

True, says Golub, "deindustrialization" is occurring in America. In 1970, manufacturing accounted for 26 percent of all jobs, but by 1994 only 16 percent of Americans worked in factories. Yet this change occurred, he contends, because of rising productivity, which ensures fewer workers are needed to keep American factories humming. A similar process has taken place with agricultural jobs, which have fallen from 44 percent of the economy in 1900 to under 3 percent. "Few today would consider reversing the gains in the standard of living afforded by the growth in agricultural productivity."

"International trade does adversely affect some individuals and industries," Golub concludes, "but there are more than offsetting benefits to the rest of the economy."

Merger Meddling Costs Too Much

Robert B. Ekelund and Mark Thornton, *The Cost of Merger Delay in Restructuring Industries*. Heartland Institute, 19 South LaSalle #503, Chicago, Illinois 60603.

Auburn University economists Ekelund and Thornton estimate that in 1996, needless regulatory delays involving business mergers cost firms $12 billion—money that could have been used to develop new products, increase profits, or lower costs to consumers.

Under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Premerger Notification Act of 1976, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has to approve any merger where the acquiring firm has at least $100 million in assets or $10 million in sales and the company being acquired has $10 million in assets or annual sales. These quarter-century-old figures haven't been adjusted for inflation so even relatively small firms must win the approval of Washington before merging.

Other federal agencies involved in mergers include the Department of Justice, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and (for utilities) the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. In addition, state attorneys general often claim approval over mergers, and 47 state utility commissions oversee utility mergers.

Consider the recent acquisition by AT&T of the cable firm Tele-Communications, Inc. (TCI). AT&T first had to have the Justice Department and the Federal Communications Commission approve the deal. It then had to win approval from 1,000 local regulators.

The primary beneficiaries of all this regulatory scrutiny, Ekelund and Thornton argue, are lawyers and regulators, since large firms have to maintain big government affairs offices. In 1998, for example, Microsoft had 88 lobbyists registered to persuade members of Congress. "Because they produce no useful goods or services the direct costs of regulatory delay are a pure deadweight loss to society."

Congress, Ekelund and Thornton conclude, could reform existing laws by raising the Hart-Scott-Rodino minimum-size thresholds to account for inflation, and restricting federal merger approval to the Federal Trade Commission and the Justice Department.

SOCIETY

NYPD Still the Finest

Heather Mac Donald, "Diallo Truth, Diallo Falsehood," in *City Journal* (Summer 1999), Manhattan Institute, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, New York 10017.

On February 4, 1999, four New York City police officers fired 41 shots at Amadou Diallo, killing the unemployed street peddler. The shooting ignited a firestorm of protest against New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and prompted scores of articles in New York dailies—for the first two months, the *New York Times* averaged 3.5 stories a day—alleging the incident was part of a pattern of rampant police brutality.

Mac Donald, a Manhattan Institute fellow, emphatically disagrees. "Every available fact about the New York Police Department," she writes, "shows how atypical the Diallo shooting was."

• The Giuliani administration began in 1993. The number of police officers who used their weapons fell by 25 percent from 1993-98, and shootings per officer dropped by 67 percent during the same period. In 1998, NYPD officers committed 0.48 fatal shootings per 1,000 cops. In contrast, Philadelphia police had 0.72 fatal shootings per 1,000 officers, Miami had 2.01, and Washington, D.C., had 3.12.

• Under Mayor Giuliani, the NYPD has steadily grown—and committed fewer killings. In 1993, the NYPD made

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266,313 arrests and killed 23 people. In 1998, after the force increased by 36 percent, the NYPD arrested 403,659 people—and only killed 19.

• Claims that the NYPD is aggressively stopping and frisking blacks are also misleading. According to the *New York Times*, the NYPD Street Crime Unit has frisked 45,000 people in the past two years, arresting 9,500 people, including 2,500 possessors of illegal guns. Yes, 63 percent of arrestees were black, but "since the majority of crime is committed by minorities against minorities," Mac Donald writes, "inevitably the subjects of frisks will be minorities, too." (Blacks in New York City are four times as likely to be murdered as whites are.)

• According to a recent Justice Department study, 77 percent of New York City blacks approve of the job the NYPD is doing.

There's also some evidence that, after the Diallo affair, NYPD officers have become less aggressive in fighting crime. Arrests by the Street Crime Unit have fallen by 47 percent in the first four months of 1999, compared to 1998. The murder rate—which fell from 2,200 in 1993 to 633 in 1998—has increased by 10 percent between February and May 1999, compared to 1998.

Mac Donald urges New York City police commissioner Howard Safir to tell his officers to respect New York City residents—and not to let up in the fight against crime. "Continuing to bring crime down," she writes, "is the best civil-rights program" Safir can offer.

Equal Treatment is What Minority Students Need

Stephan Thernstrom and Abigail Thernstrom, "*Reflections on* The Shape of the River," in *UCLA Law Review* (June 1999), UCLA Law School, 405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90095.

In their 1998 book *The Shape of the River*, Mellon Foundation president William G. Bowen and Harvard political scientist Derek Bok offered a forceful defense of affirmative action policies on college campuses. But Harvard historian Stephan Thernstrom and Manhattan Institute fellow Abigail Thernstrom argue that Bowen and Bok's analysis is severely flawed.

Using a Mellon Foundation grant, Bowen and Bok compiled test scores and academic records from students admitted to 28 elite colleges in 1951, 1976, and 1989, to produce what they called the "College and Beyond" database. That database is thoroughly skewed: Most students don't go to such upper-crust schools. In 1989, for example, only 14 percent of all college students—and 9 percent of African Americans—went to any private college. Most high school graduates go to state colleges, but only four of the 28 schools in the College and Beyond database are public institutions.

Moreover, many African-American students (and their parents) prefer historically black colleges to Ivy League schools. *Black Enterprise* recently asked several hundred professors and other university employees about the best schools for blacks, and they ranked such black schools as Howard, Spelman, Morehouse, and Xavier University higher than any Ivy League school. Yet the College and Beyond database contains no historically black schools.

Bowen and Bok claim African-American students don't drop out at a significant rate. Actually, their own data for 1989 enrollees show that 21 percent of black students failed to graduate, compared to only 6 percent of white students.

The University of California (U.C.) system abandoned racial preferences beginning with the 1998-99 school year. The results so far suggest that without affirmative action, fewer African Americans would be admitted to U.C., but because those admitted would be better qualified fewer would drop out. "If the gap in dropout rates were eliminated altogether as a result of color-blind admissions," the Thernstroms calculate, "the number of black graduates of the U.C. system would actually *increase* by 17 percent."

"As long as the average black high school senior reads at the eighth-grade level," the Thernstroms conclude, "efforts to engineer parity in the legal and medical professions are doomed to failure."

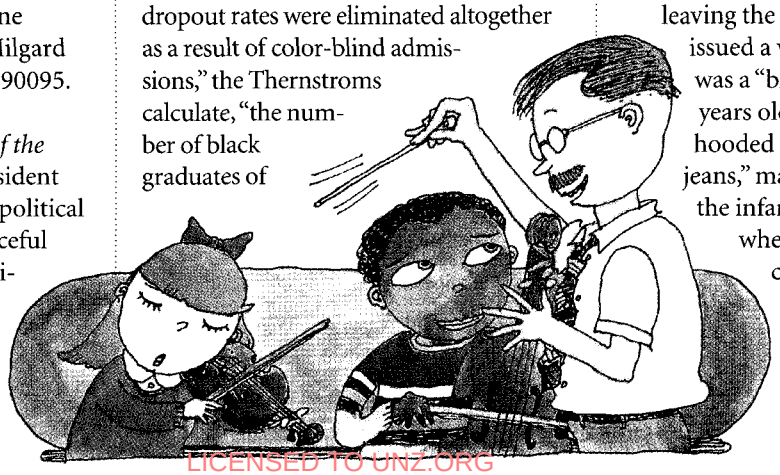
God Joins the Force

Christopher Winship and Jenny Berrien, "Boston Cops and Black Churches," in *The Public Interest* (Summer 1999), 1112 16th Street N.W. #530, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Homicide rates have been declining in many big cities; the major American city with the sharpest drop in murders has been Boston. In 1990, 152 people were murdered there; in 1998 it was only 35. Winship, a Harvard sociologist, and Berrien of Public/Private Ventures believe that the Boston homicide rate fell for many reasons, such as a declining number of 15- to 24-year-olds, but that the primary reason has been the efforts of three African-American ministers: Eugene Rivers, Raymond Hammond, and Jeffrey Brown.

In June 1992, a memorial service for a youth murdered in a drive-by shooting was interrupted by gang members who shot and stabbed several youth as mourners fled. Convinced that even churches were no longer sanctuaries, Reverends Rivers, Hammond, and Brown launched a coalition of 40 churches that agreed to cooperate with the police, even though relations between Boston police and blacks were strained.

Their efforts began to bear fruit in 1995, when white assistant attorney general Paul McLaughlin was murdered leaving the subway. After police issued a warrant for a suspect who was a "black male, about 14 to 15 years old, 5 foot 7, wearing a hooded sweat shirt and baggy jeans," many feared a repetition of the infamous Charles Stuart case, where a white man's false claims that his wife had been murdered by blacks led to hundreds of random interrogations. But



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the ministers held a press conference supporting the police, and Boston police commissioner Paul Evans appeared on a radio talk show urging the community to offer more information. Eventually, convicted killer Jeffrey Buy was indicted for the McLaughlin murder, and tensions eased. (His case awaits trial.)

Such cooperation between ministers and the police, Winship and Berrien argue, benefits both sides. The police are ill-equipped to deal with the moral and spiritual problems that encourage troubled urban youth to become criminals. And ministers have found that by helping police capture the relatively small number of young people who deserve to be in jail, they can avoid massive police interrogations in the inner city. "Freed of knee-jerk suspicion and benefiting from community cooperation," they write, "the police can concentrate on truly violent youth, rather than indiscriminately monitoring the innocent with the guilty."

SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT

Taking Out the Natural Trash

Western National Forests: A Cohesive National Strategy Is Needed to Address Catastrophic Wildlife Threats. GAO/RCED-89-65. General Accounting Office, Post Office Box 37050, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Historically, forests have been cleared through periodic fires. But in 1910 the U.S. Forest Service implemented a fire-suppression policy which ensured that dead wood and other detritus accumulated and did not burn. The result, according to the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO): As many as 39 million acres of the West could be consumed by "uncontrollable, catastrophic wildfire" by 2015. Particularly at risk are northern Idaho, western Montana, and the California mountains.

The Forest Service's fire-suppression policy has resulted in lasting ecological change. Fire-resistant species have been supplanted by more flammable trees. The flammable trees are also more likely to die from drought and insects. Fire-suppression leads to artificially dense forests in which endangered plants are less likely to thrive. A 1998 Fish and Wildlife Service study found that 135 out of 146 endangered, threatened, or rare plants would grow better in areas thinned by periodic burning than in artificially dense forests.

One Forest Service study estimated as many as 37 tons of wood and other flammable material per acre would need to be removed to reduce the threat of wildfire. That's nearly 1.5 billion tons of material that will have to be taken away from the 39 million threatened acres through measures like controlled burns or increased logging. If this natural detritus isn't removed, the GAO warns, there is a "high risk" of a major Western fire.

We welcome submissions of reports, articles, or papers you think should be summarized in THE DIGEST. Please send to P.O. Box 8093, Silver Spring, Maryland 20907.

OTHER COUNTRIES

China's Toy Army

Bates Gill and Michael O'Hanlon, "China's Hollow Military," in *The National Interest* (Summer 1999), 1112 16th Street N.W. #540, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Recent espionage scandals have drawn attention to the Chinese military. But Brookings Institution fellows Gill and O'Hanlon suggest that "the recent clamor over China's strategic intentions is greatly overblown."

China currently has 2.8 million soldiers, sailors, and marines. Most of the ground troops are used as police forces and border patrols. The Pentagon estimates that China has so few trucks and repair facilities that only 20 percent of these forces can move anywhere. If the Chinese were to attempt to invade Taiwan they could only muster about 70 amphibious support vessels, which could carry 10,000 to 15,000 troops. These forces would be pitted against a quarter-million-man Taiwanese army and 500 Taiwanese airplanes.

A more likely scenario, Gill and O'Hanlon foresee, is that the Chinese navy could blockade Taiwan, causing considerable economic distress. But the Chinese navy is so small that it did not send any ships across the Pacific until 1997—and then, after a "huge undertaking," was only able to send three ships.

Officially, China spends $12 billion on defense annually. A more reasonable estimate, say Gill and O'Hanlon, would be $35-$65 billion. That's less than a quarter of what America spends, for a force that's twice as large as ours. And much of what the Chinese military possesses is quite old. The Netherlands has more top-of-the-line military equipment than China does. The Defense Intelligence Agency predicts that by 2010, only 10 percent of the Chinese military will have "late Cold War equipment." The rest of the Red Army will have equipment made in the 1960s or earlier.

Currently, the U.S. nuclear arsenal outnumbers China's by 15 to one. Damage was done by Chinese espionage, but even with their stolen information the Chinese will have to conduct six to ten tests before perfecting a stolen missile. "China may not want to devote large amounts of resources," Gill and O'Hanlon write, "to a missile that it may not fully understand."

"In almost every respect," they conclude, "China's armed forces lag behind the U.S. military by at least a couple of decades; in many areas, they even compare poorly with the 'hollow force' that the U.S. fielded in the immediate wake of the war in Vietnam."

How Bureaucrats Have Choked Japan

Milton Ezrati, *Kawari: How Japan's Economic and Cultural Transformation Will Alter the Balance of Power Among Nations.* Perseus Books, 1 Jacob Way, Reading, Massachusetts 01867.

For over 40 years, Japan practiced economic growth by pursuing what it called *Nihon ryu*—the "Japanese way." Successive Japanese governments, all led by the Liberal Democratic Party, promised Japanese voters endless economic growth in return for tight

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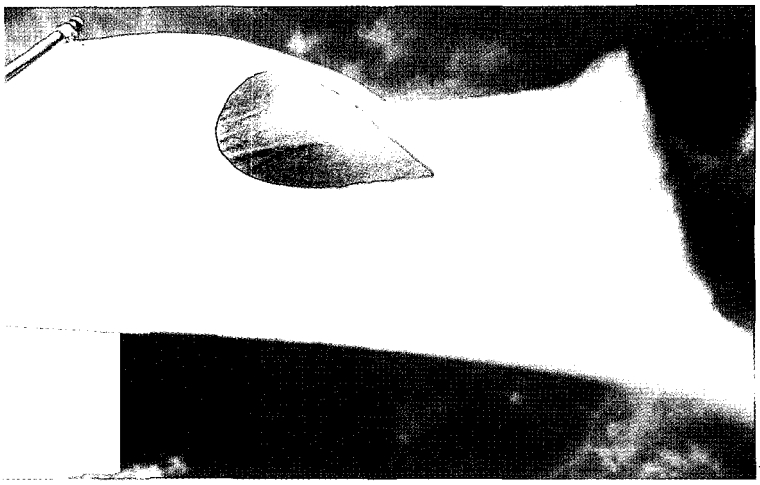

bureaucratic control of every aspect of Japanese life.

But the economic stagnation of the 1990s may result in dramatic *kawari* ("change"), reports Ezrati, chief investment officer of Nomura Asset Management. He contends that the heavy hand of bureaucracy will have to be lightened if Japan's economy is ever to regain its strength. "Many Japanese," he writes, "feel deeply betrayed by their leaders, particularly the bureaucrats in whom they put so much trust and to whom they gave so much power."

After America's Northridge earthquake in 1994, for example, several Japanese experts claimed their nation was "invulnerable" to earthquakes. But since there was no "effective disaster plan or chain of command" in place, the Kobe earthquake of 1995 proved disastrous. Around the same time, Ministry of Finance officials began to be convicted of bribery for accepting "donations" from the industries they were regulating. In 1998, officials at Donen, Japan's nuclear power agency, ignored a fire at one of the agency's nuclear plants because the fire took place during the agency's annual golf tournament. "This act of official arrogance," Ezrati writes, "was so similar to the failures of the bureaucrats during the Kobe earthquake that people wondered if such attitudes and irresponsibility were systemic."

Japan's bureaucrats have devised many ways to get the Japanese to do what they want. Consider foreign travel. Bureaucrats have long wanted Japanese to stay at home and spend their incomes in Japan. They have also wanted Japanese to save rather than consume. So the bureaucrats deliberately made "international travel inconvenient and unpleasant." Until 1963, foreign vacations were banned. Bureaucrats then tried indirect methods. They made landing at Tokyo Narita Airport as unpleasant as possible, for instance, with poor connections to other cities and an expensive, tedious bus trip downtown. Planners have also restricted tourist seats on international flights, while making sure there are "ample business class seats to accommodate the Tokyo financiers and industrialists."

KAUFFMAN continued from page 33

In many ways Conable was a classic Upstate New York Republican: parsimonious with the taxpayer's dollar, pro-civil rights, and something of a feminist. (His mother was a suffragette; his grandmother was a close friend of Susan B. Anthony. "So I came by it honestly; I wasn't just being a milquetoast for my wife's enthusiasm.") But there was something funny about him, beyond his name. He accepted no campaign contribution of greater than $50, even when Midge was pounding him for his "blind faith in the innocence of Richard Nixon," whose politics he praised as "decentralist." Almost alone among members of Congress, Conable wrote his own newsletter, which was meditative, never polemical or self-advertising. (Conable's example inspired his admirer Senator Pat Moynihan to do the same; Alfonse D'Amato and his *Doppelgänger* Chuck Schumer did not follow suit.) And he returned home at least 40 times a year, where he could be seen scouring gun shows for Indian artifacts and walking his treed 250-acre estate. "It's very difficult with Congress meeting all year long to maintain a personal relationship with your constituency," he says. "You become a shadow on the tube." Especially those who were never all that corporeal to begin with.

"I have a strong sentimental attachment, and I realize it's terribly anachronistic, to the idea of citizen-representatives serving in Congress," says Conable, adding with a smile, "I was afraid that after 20 years there as an insider, my amateur status was in some question." His successors have included Bill Paxon and Louise Slaughter, who could be from anywhere, whose ties to the district are only slightly sturdier than those of the alien celebrity Hillary Clinton's to the great state of New York.

Conable was, in an almost organic sense, the representative of the place that was his home. He was not the tribune of all the people of his district—the Italian octogenarian scraping by on a pension check; or the 19-year-old black kid, hopeless on a Rochester backstreet—but that is the fault of our distended congressional districts.

"It must be terrible to be without roots, without a place to call home," Conable mused to Richard Fenno in the early 1970s, as they drove the backroads en route to a county fair. (Fenno was researching his classic study *Home Style.*) "I have a profound sense of identification with these rural people."

He was raised among us, we sent him forth into the remoteness of the televised (and thus unreal) world to speak for us, and when his service ended he returned to us, as Madison envisioned, as Washington practiced, as precious few contemporary congressmen do. Barber Conable is the only politician I have ever met who could keep me from sneering at the euphemism "public service."

Richard Fenno called him the best of the breed. We may hope that his is not a vanishing breed.

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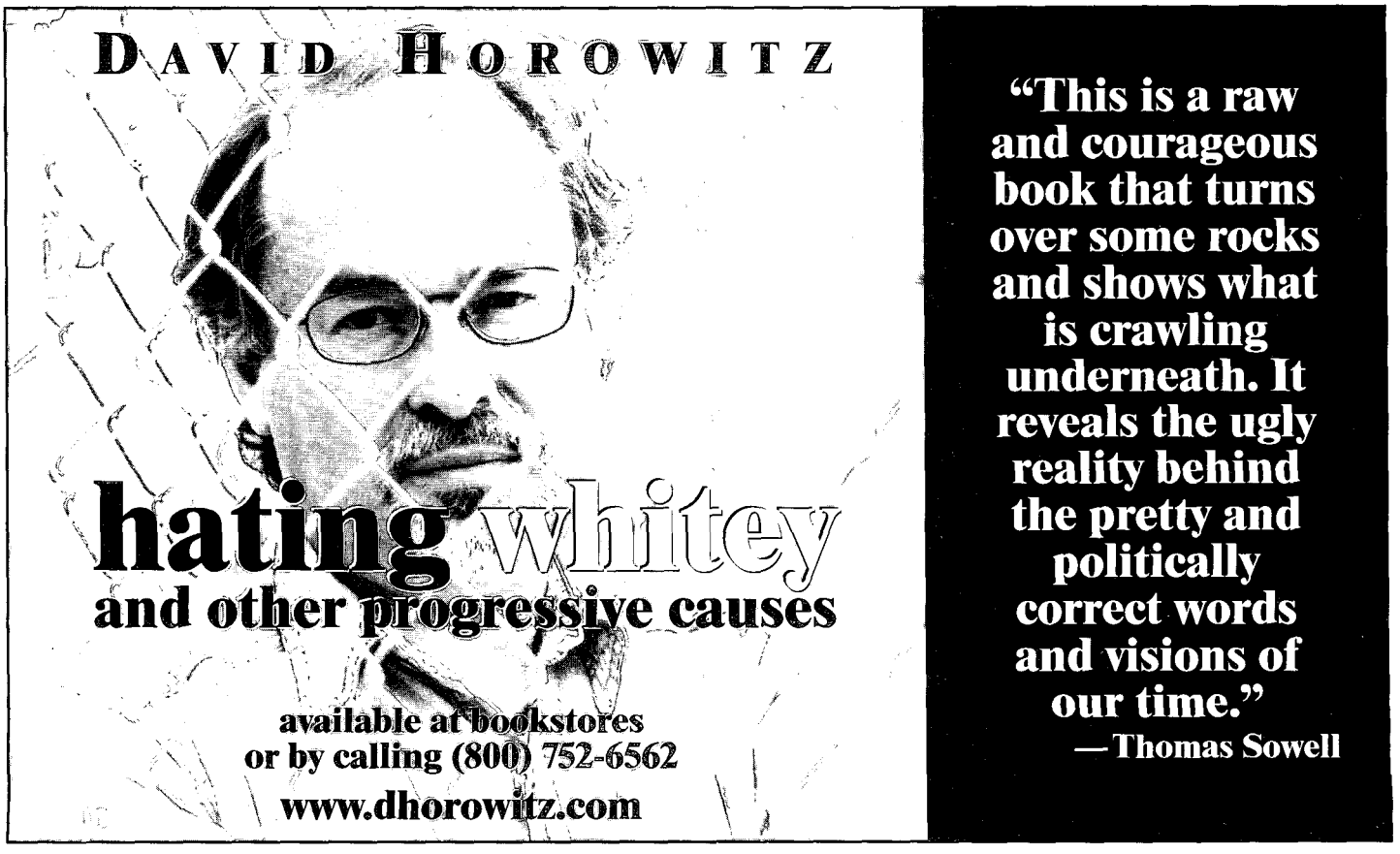
To encourage saving, Japanese bureaucrats have come up with many ways to ensure Japanese consumer prices remain high. The Ministry of Finance tries to keep the yen as cheap as possible, which makes imported goods expensive and Japanese exports cheap. Most Japanese cities, including Tokyo, still have farms where houses or apartments would normally be, because Japanese farmers are exempt from property tax and face a capital gains tax of up to 96 percent if they sell their land. Japan also prohibits flexible mortgage rates; so the average Japanese worker must save seven times his salary just to make a down payment on a house. (Other forms of borrowing such as credit cards or installment plans are also rare, making it difficult for Japanese to buy refrigerators or other big-ticket items.)

Thanks to the bureaucracy, food and clothing prices are also high. In 1956, Japan instituted the Large-scale Retail Store Law, which requires approval from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) for any store bigger than 500 square meters (smaller than the typical clothing store at a mall). The result, Ezrati observes, is that shopping in Japan is "inconvenient, unpleasant, and, because many goods frequently are not available, frustrating." With competition suppressed, Japanese retailers can also boost prices. Shirts, skirts, suits, and blouses, for example, are twice as expensive in Japan than in America. Milk, lettuce, apples, and even rice also cost twice as much.

The severe Japanese recession of the 1990s has led to increased competition between political parties. Politicians have promised, and occasionally produced, deregulation. Discounters have begun to enter Japan; it's now common for shoppers to go to the waterfront to buy cheaper rice in a warehouse. Supermarkets have begun to offer generic products. And MITI has cut the time to approve a permit for a big store from 18 months to five. As a result, in 1997 two Japanese developers announced they were planning to introduce shopping malls to Japan.

Reformers are also taking aim at bureaucracy. Professor Yukio Noguchi's recent *1940 Taisei* ("The 1940 System") showed that the Japanese bureaucratic "way," far from being rooted in history, derives from credit controls imposed in 1942 to fuel the Japanese war machine. Prominent business leaders are also calling for reform. Toyota chairman Shochiro Toyoda, for example, has called on Japan's politicians to reduce import barriers and step up deregulation. Even the national capital, Toyoda argues, needs to be moved from Tokyo to make the nation more "open" and "vigorous."

But Japanese bureaucrats aren't going to relinquish their power easily, Ezrati concludes. "For all the progress that has been and continues to be made, liberalizing reform and deregulation has a long way to go."



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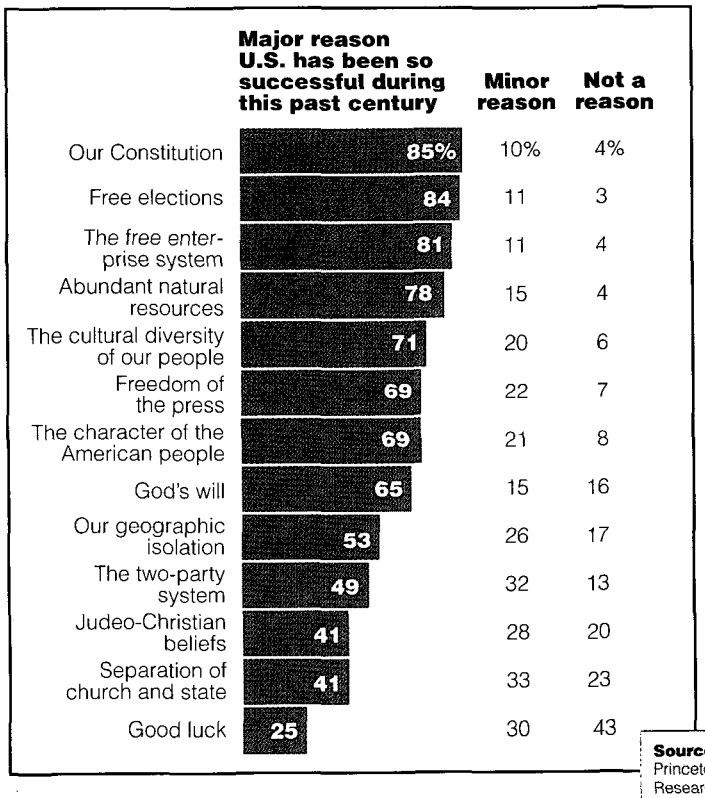
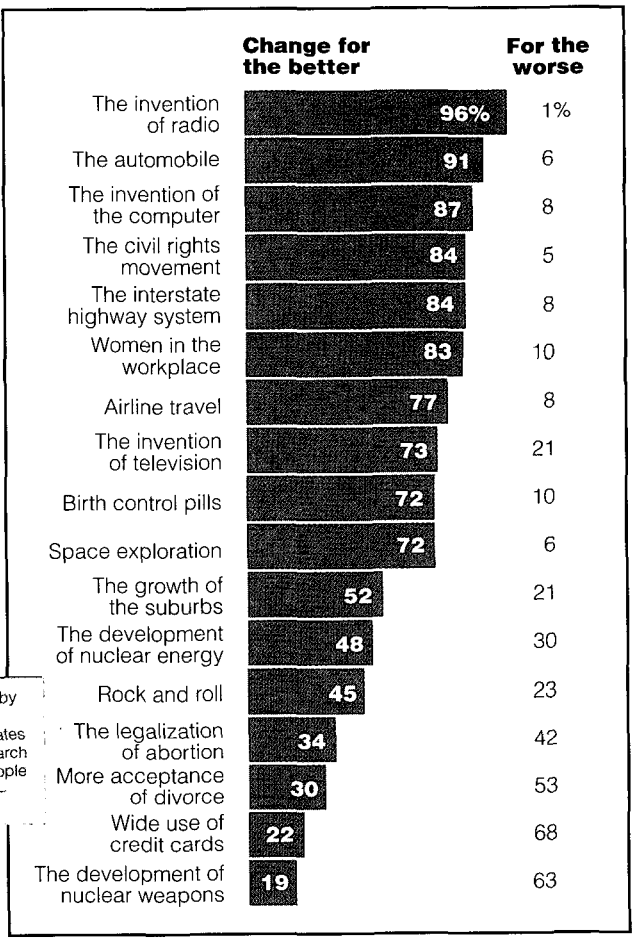
THE 20th CENTURY REVIEWED

When asked the reasons for America's success in the past century, the U.S. Constitution, our free elections, and the free enterprise system top the list. Radios, automobiles, computers, the civil rights movement, and the interstate highway system rank high on the list as changes for the better over the past century. The legalization of abortion, a wider acceptance of divorce, wide use of credit cards, and the development of nuclear weapons are seen as changes for the worse. Our greatest achievements are scientific/medical ones; our greatest failures, the Vietnam War, our presidents, and moral decline.

Question: We're interested in finding out why you think...?

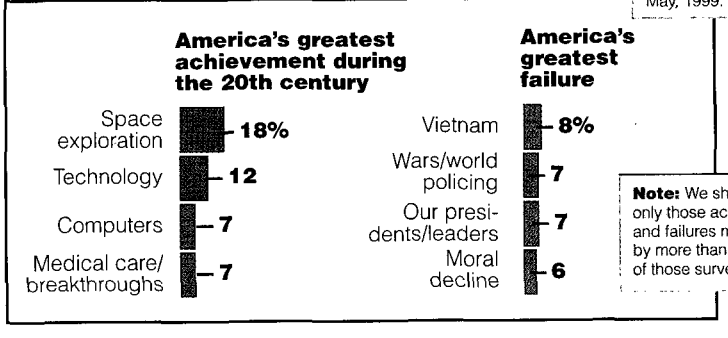


Question: I'm going to read you a list of some changes that have taken place over the last 100 years. Please tell me if you think...?



Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates for the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, April-May, 1999.

Question: What would you say has been...?



Note: We show here only those achievements and failures mentioned by more than 5 percent of those surveyed.

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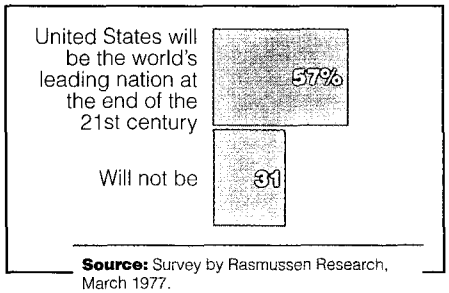
THE 21st CENTURY ANTICIPATED

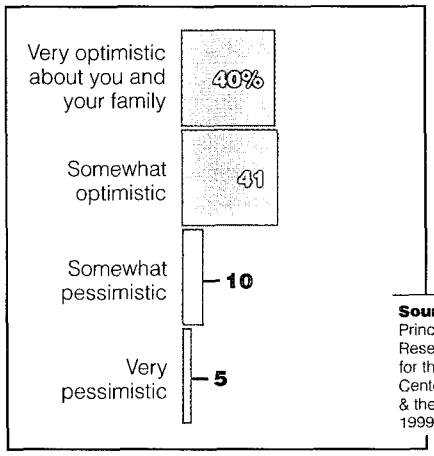
A majority of Americans believe the United States will be the world's leading nation at the end of the 21st century. People are more optimistic about their own families than they are about the nation over the next 50 years, although solid majorities are optimistic about both. A majority of us say that people will live longer, and about two in ten definitely epxpect cures for cancer or AIDS in the next 50 years. Around 80 percent say a woman or a black will definitely or probably become president. Majorities say the honesty and ethics of elected leaders will get worse.

Question: Will the...?



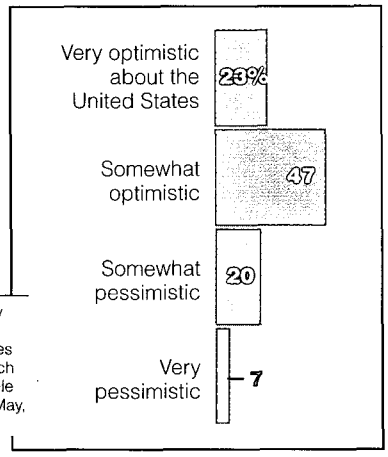
Source: Survey by Rasmussen Research, March 1977.

Question: Now, thinking about the long-term future, that is the next 50 years or so. Would you say you are...?

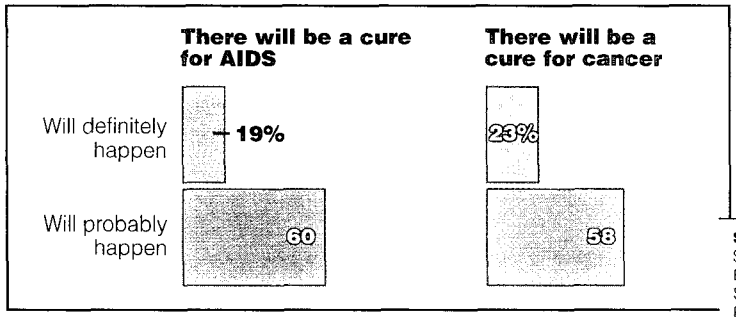


Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates for the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, April–May, 1999.

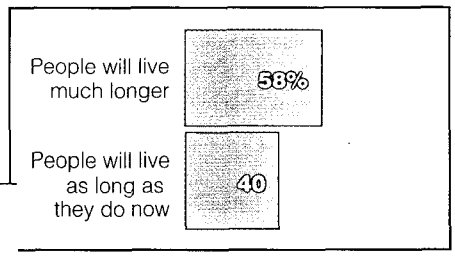
Question: Now thinking about the United States. Would you say you are...?



Question: Now I'm going to read you a list of things that may or may not happen in the next 50 years. Please tell me ...?

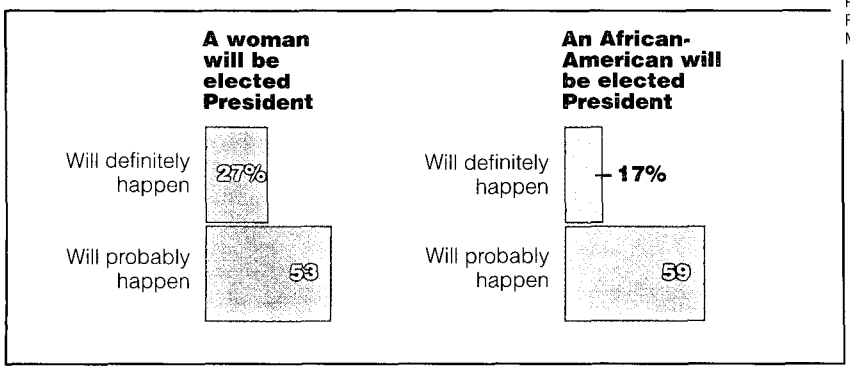


Question: Thinking ahead over the next 50 years, which is more likely to happen here in the U.S.?

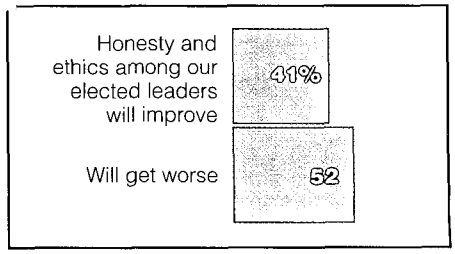


Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates for the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, April–May 1999.

Question: Now I'm going to read you a list of things that may or may not happen in the next 50 years. Please tell me...?



Question: Think ahead over the next 50 years, which is more likely to happen here in the U.S.?



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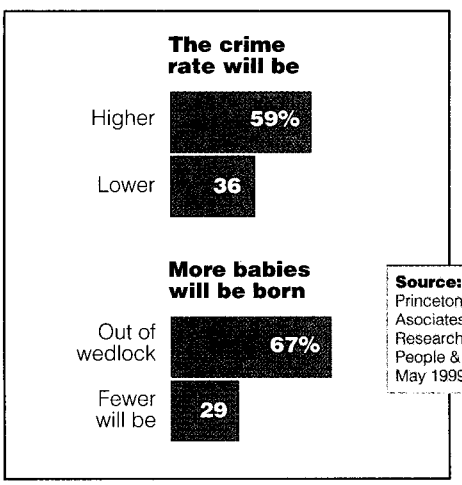
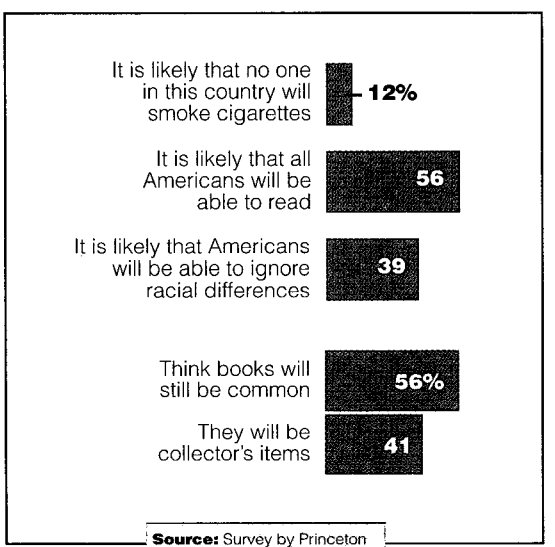
Concern about the nation's moral fiber can be seen in people's expectations that the crime rate will be higher in 50 years and that out-of-wedlock births will rise. Pollsters have been asking Americans to look into their crystal balls a lot lately, and some of their predictions are shown below. Fifty-six percent say books will still be common, but 41 percent think that they will be collector's items. Sixty percent think automobiles will no longer run on gasoline. Many polls show that a significant slice of Americans expect the second coming of Jesus Christ, and around two in ten say the world will come to an end.

Question: Thinking ahead over the next 50 years, which is more likely to happen here in the U.S.?



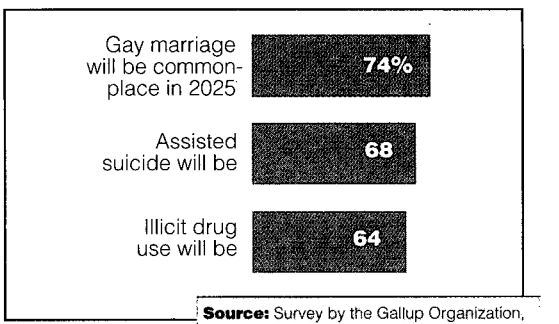
Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Asociates for the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, April–May 1999.

Question: In the next century, do you think...



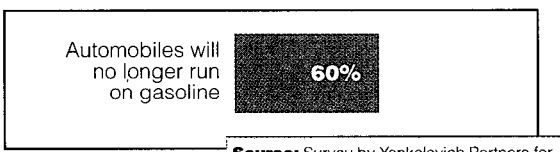
Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Asociates for *Newsweek*, January 1997.

Question: Next, as I describe some practices, please tell me...?



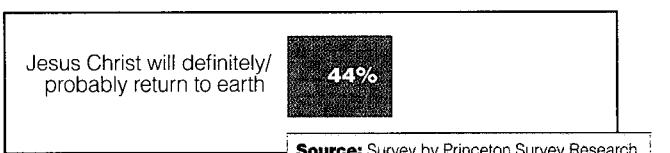
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, September–October 1998.

Question: If you had to predict, which of the following are likely to occur in the 21st century...?



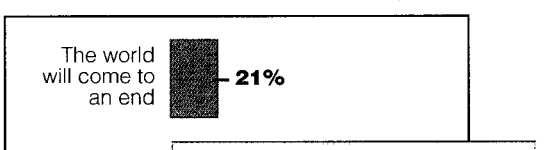
Source: Survey by Yankelovich Partners for *Time* and CNN, January 1997.

Question: Now I'm going to read you a list of things that may or may not happen in the next 50 years...?



Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates for the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, April–May 1999.

Question: If you had to predict, which of the following are likely to occur in the 21st century...?



Source: Survey by Yankelovich Partners for *Time* and CNN, January 1997.

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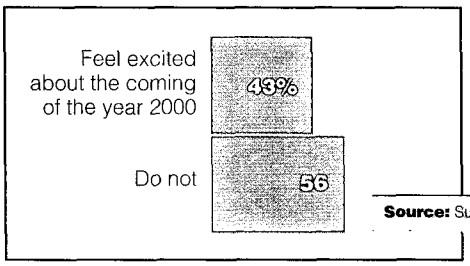
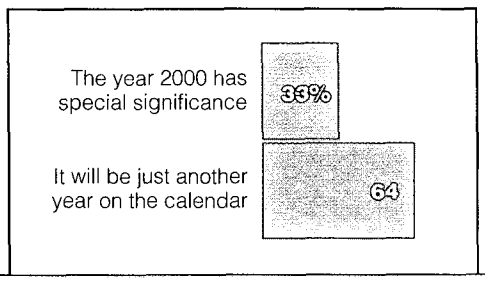
New Year's Eve

Although the marketing hoopla has started, majorities say that they don't feel excited about the coming of the year 2000, and nearly two-thirds say it will just be another year on the calendar. Around three in ten say they are worried about Y2K problems, and about 30 percent plan to stock up on extra food. Almost 70 percent say drunk drivers will be a bigger problem on New Year's Eve than Y2K glitches. A solid majority don't think the government should be involved in planning special activities to celebrate the new millenium. Last year, about a third said they went to bed before midnight.

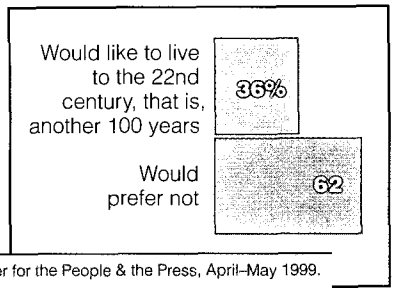
Question: Now I'm going to read a list. Please tell me if each item describes how you feel about the coming of the year 2000.



Question: How do you feel about the coming of the year 2000? Do you think...?

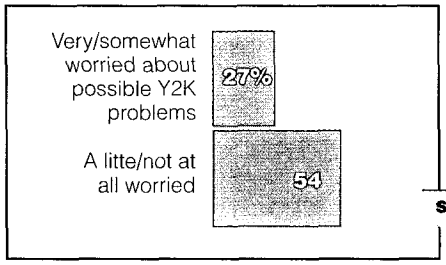


Question: If it were possible...?

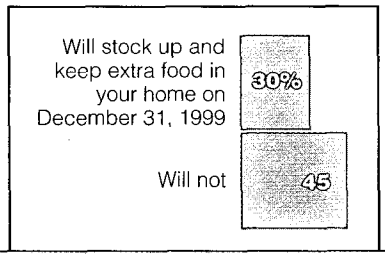


Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Asociates for the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, April-May 1999.

Question: How worried are you...?

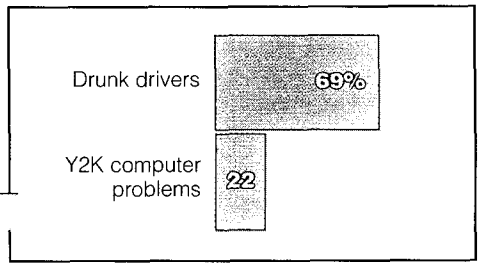


Question: Will you...?

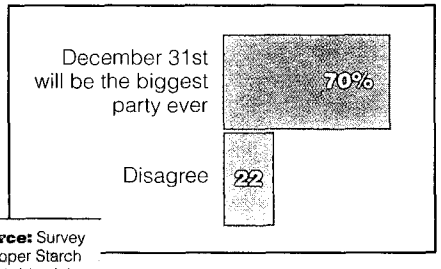


Source: Survey by Rasxmussen Research, Feburary 1999.

Question: Which will be a bigger problem on December 31, 1999?

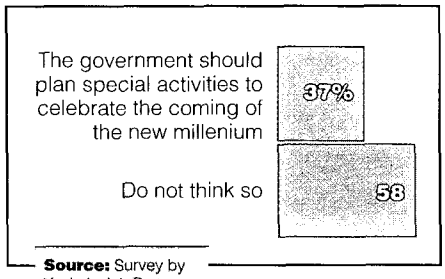


Question: Would you read through this list of statements relating to the new century and tell me...?



Source: Survey by Roper Starch Worldwide, July 1997.

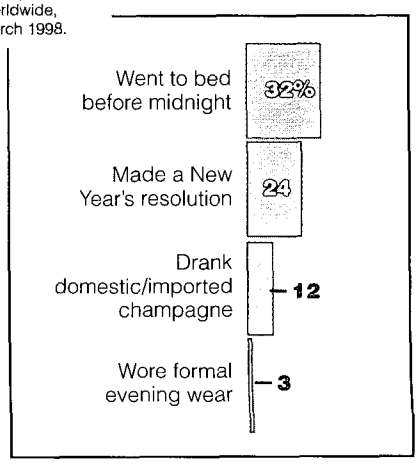
Question: Do you think...?



Source: Survey by Yankelovich Partners for Time and CNN, January 1997.

Source: Survey by Roper Starch Worldwide, March 1998.

Question: Now, thinking back to last New Year's Eve...



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the Mail

Rabbi Daniel Lapin's "Misrepresenting the Holocaust" (May/June) is disturbing. Though its noble purpose was to clarify the non-Christian nature of Nazism and the existence of Christian literature opposing Hitlerite anti-Semitism, the piece veers toward the apologetics frequently heard the further removed we become from the Holocaust. It seems more concerned with criticizing the Holocaust Museum than in righting a supposed wrong.

Jewish exhibits do not deny the existence of Christian martyrs under Nazism. However, the Nazi regime made the distinction between Jewish identity and Christian birth a touchstone for deciding who lived or died. Recognizing the methods the Nazis used to destroy the Jewish people does not mean denying the existence of decent Christians.

Curiously, Rabbi Lapin urges readers to learn about the martyrdom of the Christian Corrie ten Boom but then adds he has declined to see *Schindler's List,* presumably because Oskar Schindler was less than a model Christian. I suspect Jews who were saved by either devout Christians or dedicated opportunists would place all such souls in the category of righteous. The issue is not the existence of good Christians or bad Jews, but the capacity of the totalitarian state to destroy lives and to make war on the Jewish people.

Irving Louis Horowitz
Rutgers University

One appreciates what Daniel Lapin is trying to say: Bigotry can as easily be "Jewish" as "Christian." I am concerned by presentations that give foolish versions of Christianity and have more to do with venom than with veracity. Still, the sin of exaggeration is best met with straight facts, and here Lapin's account may be flawed. In regards to Corrie ten Boom, a tree was planted in her honor at Yad Vashem, the Holocaust and Resistance memorial above Jerusalem. I presume it is still there, commemorating Corrie ten Boom's *tsideqah* ("righteousness"), a brave Christian's resistance to anti-Semitism.

Not enough Jews have heard about her, but Judaism has not ignored her, and attempts are being made by believers in the Messiah Yeshua to propagate her memory by explaining to modern Israelis why the tree is there.

Reverend Doctor Bruce K. Gardner
St. Ninian's and Forglen Church of Scotland

Rabbi Lapin replies:
Reverend Gardner and Mr. Horowitz appear to have inadvertently collaborated with one another to buttress my point. Of course Israel's museums honor Christians. America's museums do not. American Jews, not Israelis, have replaced the faith of Abraham with that of secular liberalism. Thus only in America is the Holocaust exploited to promote suspicion of Christianity, because in America only Christianity has the political power to threaten secular liberal hegemony. Of course the totalitarian state has the capacity to destroy lives. Of course I am criticizing the Holocaust Museum. I do so for its lamentable failure to demonstrate that totalitarian regimes in our century have arrived in lockstep with rampant secularism and are effectively defied by fervent Christianity. Even in Israel, it turns out, Corrie ten Boom is best remembered by Christians, not Jews. Thank you gentlemen.

It is telling that a respected public policy magazine can devote an issue to fatherhood (September/October) with no mention of how the divorce industry is forcibly ripping children from fathers who have neither consented to nor given grounds for divorce. The principal dynamic driving fatherlessness in this country is not the flight of men from families and their children; it is a power grab by courts and bureaucracies posing as the true champions of children over the heads of their evil parents.

Barbara Dafoe Whitehead and David Popenoe ("Defining Daddy Down") seem to know this, yet they insist on excoriating fathers' groups who alone are trying to do something about it. They claim the groups' agenda is pro-divorced dads. Actually, father's groups do not exclude married men; most vehemently oppose forced divorce.

The only people who can rescue children from the clutches of this machine are their fathers, who are now organizing politically to do so. These fathers are not asking for special privileges but simply demanding enforcement of the Constitution, which would put this judicial kidnapping racket out of business. The divorce machine knows the only threat to its power as surrogate father is true fathers, which is why it is incarcerating huge numbers of them without trial, without charge, and without counsel.

Instead of talking about the divorce machine, however, you served up sentimental schmaltz. I am genuinely pleased the fathers who wrote for you love their children; so, no doubt, do the politicians who trot their children out as political props. But this is not the business of public policy. *TAE* would do children a greater service by exposing the violations of the constitutional rights of those whose love for their children is proven

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daily not by advertising it to the world, but by quiet sacrifice and struggle to protect their children from the ravages of predatory government.

Stephen Baskerville
Howard University

As a traditional wife of almost 50 years, I have persisted, not always easily, following my instincts to do my most important job: raising five children. Your fatherhood issue hit a lot of nails on their heads, especially with Steven Rhoads' "The Case Against Androgynous Marriage" and Ben Stein's "An L.A. Dad."

Not having had experience with "good dads," I feel both enthusiasm and sadness. I'm sure many men and women are confused regarding their roles, not only from lack of examples but also from the cultural flip-flops of recent years.

I can't wait for a motherhood issue. I'd like to understand better why so many wives are picking and choosing what duties suit them. If women want good husbands and fathers, they must realize they further that aim when they do a good job in their natural roles: helping in the work partnership, contributing more than birthing and babysitting. Men respond to old-fashioned nurturing, comfortable homes, good meals, relaxing ambiance.

Please use the enclosed check to send me three copies for my sons. They, like most husbands, can use all the help they can get.

Maggi Emery Mossholder
Eaton Rapids, Michigan

Your September/October SCAN maintains I told a group of parents that if they did not like Ithaca, New York's multicultural policy [regarding the "celebration" of homosexuality for middle-school students], they should send their children to private schools.

At a school board meeting, I did endorse the right of parents to send their children to private schools, and I understand how those remarks were misinterpreted. But I do not believe parents should send their children to private schools when they disagree with what is taught in public schools. Critical feedback within our system makes our schools more lively and more dynamic.

Moreover, parental disagreement is not always a sign of failure. My children have been exposed to much that I disagree with in the Ithaca public schools, but one of the functions of public education should be to expose children to different perspectives than those of their parents.

Steve Shiffrin
President, Ithaca Board of Education

I was happy to see your write-up of my tax debate with William Gale and Newt Gingrich (ENTERPRISING, September/October). I want to clarify one point, however. The phrase, "The art of taxation consists in plucking the maximum amount of feathers with the least amount of hissing," originates with Jean-Baptiste Colbert, a Frenchman from the Court of Louis XI. Tellingly, the quotation applies just as well to late-twentieth-century Washington as it does to the France of the *ancien régime.*

Amity Shlaes
Wall Street Journal

Yesterday we delivered our first-born to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. It was a day of pride, tears, fears, and letting go. We are passing the baton to an organization that has been making men out of boys for 200 years.

As we stood outside Michie Stadium in the damp morning air, there was a sense of great excitement. After living in California all his life, West Point will be a culture shock for our son. He is the first soldier in the family since his grandfathers fought in World War II.

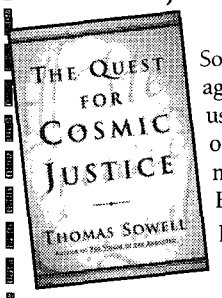
We entered the stadium in a single line, listened to a few words from a colonel, and David was gone, marching single file over the 50-yard line with the other future cadets. Our family spent the day touring the base, learning what the next several weeks would be like for our son. That evening we caught our last glimpse of him for several months, as he marched out in uniform with over a thousand of his classmates.

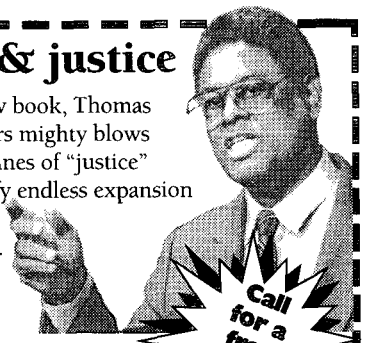
The next day we came across your July/August issue on military academies. After reading *TAE* cover to cover we are at peace with our decision to send our son to West Point. In a world of short-sighted, selfish teenagers, our prayer is to raise men of integrity, discipline, and insight.

Judy and David Eastman
Huntington Beach, California

CORRECTIONS: Words were inadvertently dropped in a sentence in Steven Rhoads' "The Case Against Androgynous Marriage" (September/October). It should have read, "In one way men and women get exactly what they want in marriage." In the same issue's "Defining Daddy Down," by Barbara Dafoe Whitehead and David Popenoe, the phrase "irresponsible fatherhood" should have read "responsible fatherhood."

Sowell, liberty & justice





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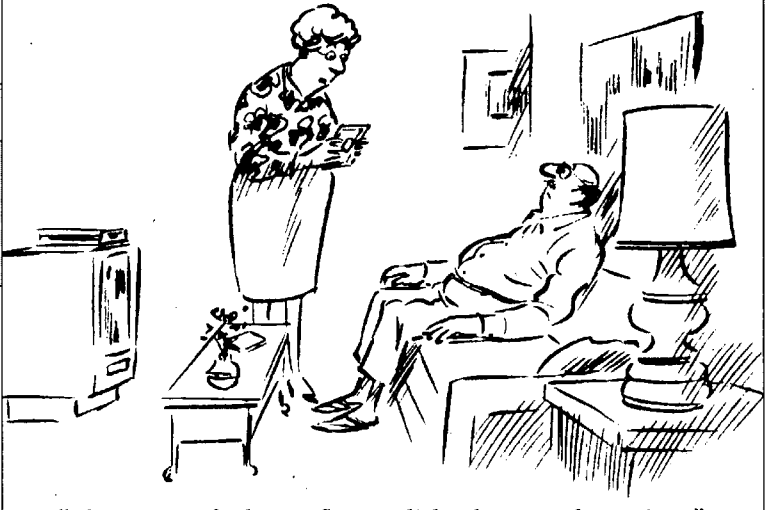
"I'm locked in a major custody battle, Renshaw. My wife doesn't want me and my mother won't take me back."

"Stop diving underwater when I'm talking to you.



"I have your faults on floppy disk when you have time."

"For only $79 a month, all of our arguments will be fought by trained professionals."

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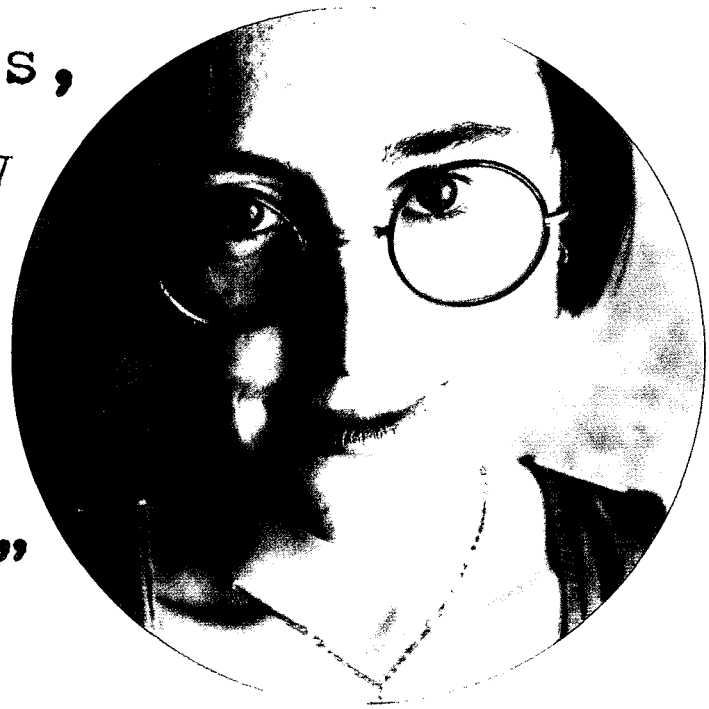
"After trying several brokers, I finally found a stock market whiz. Me."



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Mrs. Charles' story has two happy endings.

One story concerns the common plight of the elderly in a nursing care facility who crave more companionship.

The other is about special needs students: kids whose learning and behavioral problems usually result in too much anger and too little self-esteem.

Faith Charles has a novel approach to both problems: her special needs classes make monthly visits to the California Armenian Home. These visits are especially welcome during the holidays when the students put up decorations, sing carols, make crafts and generally add some holiday cheer to the residents' lives.

Yet, Mrs. Charles' kids may actually receive more than they give. Their self-esteem increases from learning that they can make a real difference in someone else's life. What's more, the activities they share with the residents improve their reading, writing, art and communication skills.

For scripting happy endings to two very different stories, State Farm is pleased to present Mrs. Faith Charles with our Good Neighbor Award® and to donate $5,000 to the Fresno Unified School District Special Education Department in Fresno, California.

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